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MODERN BUSINESS ENGLISH

BY

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Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

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TO
MY MOTHER AND FATHER

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FOREWORD

"Modern Business English" is presented in the confidence that young men and women in business or about to enter business can profit by the study of the principles and rules of standard English as applied to business writings.

Abundant opportunity is given for practical experience in writing letters and reports. Every chapter contains numerous oral and written exercises, illustrating the principles and rules, and based on actual quoted letters and problems taken from contemporary business activities. These tested exercises afford practice in the analysis and solution of modern business problems involving the use of written English.

"Modern Business English" incorporates a discussion of the fundamental principles of business writing, a book of specimens, and a handbook for study and drill in the essentials of correctness in the mechanical details of writing. The chapter on Correctness has been amplified to include exercises because, as every teacher realizes, undergraduates need at least to review the indispensable rules governing the mechanical details of writing. The inclusion of this chapter makes possible ready reference in the course of class discussion and home preparation of written assignments.

The author is indebted to his predecessors, especially to Professors Gardner, Hotchkiss, Kilduff, Naether, and Raymond, whose investigations and contributions in the field of business English have been of inestimable value to all students of the subject.

Thanks are due to those companies and individuals, including students successful in business, who gave letters and reports from their files. Without their co-operation the long list of quoted letters could not have been compiled. It is not possible to print here the long list of those who have generously given permission to quote or who have furnished valuable material, but their names appear in the text in connection with quoted material.

The inspiration for undertaking the task of writing this book has come from the author's students, whose lively devotion to the cause of better English in business is a hopeful indication of better things to come in business writing.

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PART I

MODERN BUSINESS ENGLISH

Chapter I

THE POINT OF VIEW

The importance of English.—Your English is always with you. You cannot take it or leave it as caprice suggests or fancy dictates. You learned it from your parents, teachers, and playmates. The inescapable fact of birth or environment, or both, determined upon English as the medium of your thinking and communication. English, therefore, is a rewarding subject of study. Upon the accurate and skillful employment of English words and phrases depends much of the success of your efforts in the professions and in business; for without the ability of clear and forceful expression, no human being can make social or business use of ideas and knowledge.

English as a means to an end.—English is not an end in itself. Like all languages, rightly considered, it serves always as a means to an end; it is a vehicle for ideas, thoughts, facts, and emotions. By means of language you establish contact with friends in social life and with associates and customers in business. To look upon English as an instrument in business is to recognize its true value as an indispensable asset in your equipment for success in life. To master the effective uses of this instrument requires patience and practice. Once, however, you have learned how to control and apply English, you need not be inarticulate, for with language you can communicate your thoughts, desires, and needs.

Experience has demonstrated repeatedly the truth of the saying that, after capital, good business letters are a firm's most valuable asset. As soon as capital is available, the business man proceeds to use English persuasively in letters, which are indispensable instruments in the process of establishing and conducting his business.

Definition of business English.—*Business English is standard English adapted to the needs of business.* Thus the phrase "business English" is a term of convenience only. It definitely marks off and stresses specific applications of the English language to certain established types of writing. Important examples are: business letters in their various forms; business reports; abstracts and summaries made by subordinates for executives or controlling groups; book reviews in magazines devoted to business, and articles in such magazines.

Business English and literary English.—The foregoing definition does not emphasize the existence of a special language within the English language. Business English is not made up of words and phrases isolated and different from those in common use. The limited number of approved business terms, such as *voucher, trade acceptance, layout, close-up, delivery on consignment,* and *"sold on the idea"* are far from constituting the vocabulary of business English. These terms, with highly specialized applications, are, as a matter of fact, used only in limited circles. Such terms may be employed when you are striving for technical precision, but never when writing for business readers in general.

Except in the minds of misguided persons, who persist in repeating mechanically the old-fashioned, outworn, semi-legal jargon of the business writings of fifty years ago, there exists no special language of business correspondence. Such lingo consists of locutions like "beg to remain," and "your esteemed favor of the 10th inst.," long ago discarded by progressive writers for the vital language actually spoken and written by people of the twentieth century. The true language of business is essentially like the language employed for social and literary purposes by alert, intelligent men and women of today.

Literary English is language used to produce pleasing effects upon readers of poems, dramas, essays, and novels. The English used in the fine art of literature is employed to stir significant emotions and noble thoughts, in the confidence that the reader will be impressed sufficiently to add beauty to his life and nobility to his conduct.

With the aid of very similar English the writer of business English evokes a favorable business response from the reader of his message. The English used in the applied art of busi-

ness writing is employed to cultivate favorable emotional and mental responses, with the aim of retaining old customers and winning new ones. Business English seeks to impress the reader by specifically suggesting a desire to serve him in quality of goods or service, or in price, language being used persuasively to present these factors as inducements to action. In both arts, then, the ultimate purpose is the same: in both, English is employed to stimulate favorable responses.

Business writing a useful art.—The foregoing paragraphs stress the essential similarities existing between business English and literary English—not only in the language itself, but also in the uses to which this language is put. There are obvious reasons why, in the face of these similarities, one use of English is classified as a fine art, and another use as an applied art. Unlike literary composition, business writing is classified as a useful art because it has an immediate and practical end in view. It does not create beautiful images or phrases merely in the hope that the reader will be stimulated to improve his sense of beauty and conduct. The business writer specifically applies his images and thoughts to the needs of an individual prospect or well-defined group of prospects. Unlike the man of letters, the business correspondent, for example, does not write to all readers indiscriminately, but to an identified customer, say, in Peoria, Illinois; or again, the writer of a business report directs his report to a known and organized group of men who control the plant and processes on which the report is based.

Writers of this type draw upon the resources of the English language to make the reader act, and act favorably. Whether they sell service or tangible goods, their object is to stir direct, material action. Their ideal is a transaction that shall be profitable to seller and buyer alike. Thus they apply language to the actual problem of business. Their writings initiate, develop, and complete utilitarian activities universally recognized as dealing with the immediately useful occupations and needs of human beings, and in such an enlightened way as to promote the material welfare of the race.

The science of business writing.—Success in the useful art of business writing is conditioned by the writer's ability to apply the science of business English. The science of English

composition may be defined as the organized body of rules and principles governing the practice of writing.

Since the days of Aristotle in the fourth century before Christ, treatises have been written on the art and science of composition. On the basis of wide experience, rules have been invented and principles have been discovered, for the guidance of those who desire to shape their written appeals to the established laws of composition. Although the art of business writing as we know it today is modern in origin, it is based on virtually the same rules and principles observed by writers down through the centuries.

Not to know the rules and principles governing the art of writing is to scribble blindly. It is desirable, therefore, that the student realize the soundness and validity of certain fundamental guides to writing. The success of important sales campaigns can be reasonably assured if the writer's procedure is not left to chance but is in accordance with basic principles. These principles are well established because they have been tested repeatedly in past experience.

An illustration will help to make this clear. A man has fractured a bone. To whom had he better entrust the healing of the bone? To the neighborhood bone-setter or to the licensed surgeon? The intelligent patient invariably chooses the surgeon. The surgeon has been trained in the theory and practice of surgery. He knows the intimate and inevitable relation between causes and effects, and precisely how these causes and effects are modified and influenced by changed and changing conditions. His science guides his practice. His practice, in turn, teaches him how to apply scientific principles intelligently to new cases as they arise. Such a trained man has a broad and deep view of his specialty. He is not limited, like the untrained quack, to hit or miss methods. The quack muddles through from case to case, picking up a shred of experience here and a hint there, but without ever arriving at a *safe* generalization based on adequate data. Medical men have for generations pooled the results of their experience. On the basis of this accumulated knowledge has been formulated the science of medicine and surgery.

Science and practice.—Because the principle illustrated in the last paragraph applies also to English composition, the teachings in this book are grounded firmly on the science of

composition. The following chapters offer neither short-cuts nor quack methods, but, in place of these, sound laws of writing. These guiding rules and principles, which apply specifically to various types of business writing, are discussed and illustrated in connection with practical problems.

It is sufficient here to emphasize two points: first, that a close agreement exists between the theory and practice of literary, or fine-art English, and the theory and practice of applied-art, or useful-art English; and secondly, that the problems in the following chapters are practical throughout, and that practice is always based on sound principles. The object is to teach students how to compose successful writings that will be of real value in business. The young writer will soon realize that he fails where he does not observe the science of composition, and that he succeeds where he follows the teachings of the science of composition.

Oral and written salesmanship.—Written business English differs in several essentials from oral business English. It is necessary to understand these vital differences at the outset, because this book deals exclusively with business writing.

A business appeal is effective in proportion to the writer's recognition of the limitations imposed upon him by the medium he has chosen for his message. Take, for example, the sales letter. It has been said that the sales letter is salesmanship on paper. Yet a salesman cannot hope to succeed in a letter if he attempts to reproduce, exactly, the personal language he is accustomed to use in talks with customers. A sale is the object of the personal as well as of the letter appeal. Both can be equally effective, but in different ways.

The distinguishing characteristics are found in the conditions surrounding the approach. One of the most important is the attention value of the medium. The physical presence of the sales letter differs from that of the personal salesman, but it can be made equally attractive through careful selection of stationery and close attention to all the factors entering into the physical make-up of the letter.

Just as a salesman who is dressed in flashy clothes and flaring cravat cannot secure a favorable hearing from conservative customers, so the letter decked out in colors and embellished with flashy illustrations fails to reach customers

whose suspicions are aroused by gaudy display. In both instances good taste is violated.

The desirable quality of tone is more difficult to achieve in the typed letter than in the speaking voice aided by the personality of the salesman. Written words, however, can, in their own way, be made to suggest the correct tone. Just as the alert salesman adapts his language to the customer's level, so the letter contains skillfully chosen words in combinations designed to reflect a chatty, personal tone or, on the other hand, a more conservative, formal tone.

The difference between the oral and the written forms is explained by the fact that compactness is the determining factor in letter salesmanship. Compactness sets definite limitations that the writer is bound to observe. The letter must accomplish in one page what the salesman in a personal talk accomplishes in not less than twenty times the number of words. The letter can get the same effect, but because it must do so in a definitely circumscribed space, the writer is constrained to select words with precision, and combine them with great care for the effect written words produce upon the reader. He stakes his appeal on one set of sentences, whereas the salesman adds to, and modifies, his talk to suit a customer's changing attitude.

The letter-writer, then, must win the attention of the reader with a single well-chosen talking point, and must concentrate attention upon this point so effectively that doubts and questionings are not aroused, for he cannot, like the salesman who is face to face with the customer, meet objections as they arise. Thus, whatever is included in the letter is the result of a severe sifting process by which the writer is enabled to present his message persuasively.

The importance of imagination.—Among writers who successfully adapt standard English to the needs of business, the value of imagination is fully recognized. Imagination is, in fact, an indispensable part of a business writer's equipment. With imagination, his writing has color and force; his thinking is original, and his plans for the future are characterized by broad and deep insight. Imagination strengthens and sharpens his judgment. Imagination makes of him a man of vision. What, then, is this imagination, that it is so important a part of a business man's equipment?

Imagination is the picturing power or activity of the mind. It is the constructive or creative faculty of the mind. It belongs, then, to the productive faculty.

The imagination, in its simplest operation, reproduces images formerly acquired by the mind and stored in it. A person endowed with a good imagination can, for example, recall fully and vividly the incidents of last year's stockholders' meeting. Imagination, by aiding the process of association, aids memory.

In its more complex functioning, the imagination, by recombining the facts of experience into new forms, creates. An architect, for instance, visualizes the new tower building before it is begun, or a civil engineer visualizes the new bridge before it is built.

Uses of the imagination.—To most people the word "imagination" suggests only literature or one of the other fine arts. Yet imagination is also scientific and practical. It is used by the inventor and the business executive quite as much as by the man of letters. In fact, all men of foresight and keen vision, in whatever walk of life they are found, are endowed with vivid imaginations.

The differences among great achievers lie not in the kind of imagination they possess, but in the applications they make of imaginative power. Shakespeare, Gladstone, Napoleon, and Edison reveal essentially the same power of imagination. The difference is found in the material to which they applied the imagination.

Shakespeare imaged life fully. He saw life and he saw it whole. Nothing pertaining to the thoughts, acts, and emotions of men and women escaped him.

Gladstone's image embraced all those geographical, racial, sociological, and economic considerations which went into the statesmanlike control of a vast commonwealth of nations upon which the sun never sets.

Napoleon could dispense with mechanical devices used by the average general in visualizing the proper disposition of troops on far-flung battle lines. Napoleon's imagination vividly portrayed the valleys and plains of Europe. It pictured all the intricate details of troop stations and movements in their relation to tactics and strategy.

The creative faculty of an inventor like Edison images an alluring model of the perfected machine he aims to construct. His imagination pictures all the details long before even a physical working model has been constructed.

In the same way the business executive sees ahead, formulates plans, and works out, it may be, advertising and selling campaigns, because he has the power of recombining the facts of past experience into new forms. He improves present business practice and methods of manufacture because he has a vision of something more workable, efficient, and serviceable than at present exists anywhere outside his imagination. The executive who plans a new direct-by-mail selling campaign is led to devise more effective sales units by the mental image which is based on the combination of the most useful tried methods with the increment of the new and untried methods suggested by the creative faculty. He is able to devise original plans for the company because he has the power to create. Imagination makes him foresighted.

For the writer of business English, the value of imagination lies also in the increased power which comes with the use of details vividly conceived and, therefore, convincingly expressed in compelling language. His imagination calls up such a lifelike image of his subject that his mind is stimulated to provide vital combinations of words. These attract the reader, compel his attention, and thus focus his mind on the message.

The imaginative writer avoids trite expressions because they lack vitality and originality. They no longer have the power of stimulating attention. Colorless, vague, commonplace statements find no place in his active vocabulary. He does not allow himself to write: "This new stove is capable of varied uses." Such a statement is ineffective because it is not imaginative. It suggests no images. It makes no concrete appeal. It is not even definite and explicit, like the following sentence: "This new Nonpareil range is designed to burn oil or gas in summer, and coal or wood in winter." Such a sentence makes a specific appeal.

The imagination suggests concrete details upon which images are based. These are so vividly phrased that the reader is made to feel as well as understand.

Routine.	*Imaginative.*
Your bookkeeper will always be up with the month's postings.	Hurriedly, nervously, the bookkeeper searches for the next account. Reams of awkward pages must be flopped and reflopped. Crumpled, ruffled edges delay his searching fingers. At each operation he loses precious minutes.
The office will not be crowded with large ledgers if you install this new system.	Compact L. B. Ledger trays or desks, saving from 10% to 50% of space, replaced the massive ledgers of old. . . .
The new method makes accounts accessible in a moment.	Crisp, vertically indexed L. B. Ledger cards replaced the flimsy sheets with their crumpling, roughened edges. Now the bookkeeper can locate, post to, and replace an L. B. Ledger card in the time it took just to find an account in the ledger of his father's generation.

Cultivate imagination.—Every intelligent human being is endowed by nature with the faculty of imagination. This gift of imagination, like every other gift, can be weakened if it is not exercised; but, on the other hand, it can be strengthened if properly cultivated.

Every young aspirant to success should make definite plans for improving his power of imagination. He can do this most effectively and economically by reading the standard English classics. Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, and Tennyson, to mention no others, reveal imaginative power. Their writings are charged with imagination. To read them attentively is to stir the imagination, to exercise it. Careful study of modern business literature is also rewarding. Successful modern writers in this field know the classics of our language, have learned from them how to vitalize the business message, and thus have pointed the way to students of business English.

Roy Dickinson, writing in *Printers' Ink* (October 9, 1924), illustrates the practical value of studying literary masterpieces:

"The other day I talked to the president of a small advertising agency. He is noted for his unusual copy. He told me

of a broadside, sent to a list of shoe jobbers, which had produced a greater number of return postals asking for a sales plan than anything else he had ever sent out for a certain manufacturer. This broadside was the result of a careful study of several of Victor Hugo's books. It contained an unusual idea described in words which had color and sparkle. He had fed upon Hugo's words until his own style took on something of its simplicity and color. He had been able from his reading to glorify a humble product and give it life and interest."

Find the service element.—Modern business of the progressive sort considers every message in the light of the service it renders. This attitude recognizes the fact that business is in an advanced stage of merchandising. Service rather than price is the distinguishing feature. When, quality considered, prices have been standardized in a certain field, one firm differs from another only in the service it offers customers. This fact is recognized by national advertisers. For a long time the service appeal has dominated advertising copy, which represents the most advanced form of modern business writing.

Because it meets a real need in the business world, the service element has become the established point of view in all other types of business writing. Like sales copy, business writing in general is planned with reference to the circumstances of the reader. The reader is the determining factor. Material is chosen and organized with a view to satisfying his needs and desires. The writer's slogan is, "Consider the reader."

Cultivating good will.—The first duty of the business writer is, of course, to protect the capital and profits of his employer. Nevertheless, this aim can be realized only on the basis of an intelligent interpretation of the employer's relation to his customers. The effective approach, therefore, harmonizes the needs of both seller and buyer. Both are assured protection if the spirit is that of sympathetic consideration. Thus, however prominent the item of profit, the deciding factor is the retention of the customer's good will.

A good collection letter, for example, is planned from the reader's point of view. If it is not, good will cannot be retained. To demand the money by direct insistence on the rights of the creditor, and without full consideration of the

situation in which the letter finds the debtor, may collect the money, but at the expense of alienating good will. Such a collection letter is not profitable. The creditor's immediate gain is outbalanced by the loss of profits from future orders that would have been secured if the writer had adopted a sympathetic tone reflecting the spirit of service.

Business writing is most successful in protecting the seller's capital and profits when it is planned and expressed to show how the seller's views are advantageous to the reader. The problem is to analyze a situation until those elements are found which present the case in the light of genuine service. Such an enlightened attitude is both just and profitable, for modern business is squarely built on the policy of fair dealing. A fair deal is one in which the interests of both seller and buyer are protected. In fact, continued success in business is not possible without a very real understanding of the modern practice of business service.

The style of business writing.—The literature of business is characterized by definite aims and marked qualities of style. The style varies according to the aims to be accomplished. It may be dry, direct, and unadorned, or, on the other hand, warm, glowing, and elaborated. At bottom, however, a good style results from attention to the essential qualities of business writing, which are: (1) consideration, (2) construction, (3) compactness, (4) correctness, (5) character, (6) concreteness, and (7) cheerfulness.

Tested by the writer's purpose, business writings divide into two familiar classes: literature of knowledge, and literature of power. Each has marked stylistic traits peculiar to the type.

Literature of knowledge.—When the primary object is to convey information, the writing classifies as literature of knowledge. Among the many possible forms are abstracts and summaries, catalogues and books of directions, certain types of business reports and book reviews, and business articles limited to the presentation of statistical or other matter-of-fact information.

In literature of knowledge, clearness and accuracy are more important than interest. Interest is supplied largely, if not exclusively, by the reader. When, for example, a business report is limited to complete and accurate presentation of

data, no attempt being made to influence the course of action of those to whom the report is submitted, the tone and style are impersonal. When the investigation leading to the report is begun at the behest of certain executives, these executives read a matter-of-fact report with keen interest. Reader interest, therefore, need not be stimulated by means of rhetorical devices. It exists before the reading begins. Such ready-made interest is held and satisfied through the display of sound judgment in the selection of details, and through flawless logic in their organization.

In such writing, where the appeal is wholly to the mind, clearness is the ideal. It follows that a direct, unadorned, explanatory style is best adapted to the expression of matter-of-fact material. If the writer has selected, organized, and phrased his data so that they make a clear impression, he has done his full duty. The essential qualities of literature of knowledge are illustrated in the structure and vocabulary of the following selection:

> These, then, are the three general factors which have resulted in average turnovers of 16.33 for Simmons goods as against 2.6 to 4.5 for general furniture and dry goods. Checking them off they are, briefly:
> (*a*) Varied floor stock with small reserve and frequent re-orders.
> (*b*) Aggressive merchandising and selling.
> (*c*) Strong local advertising tie-up.

Literature of power.—There are, however, writings in which clear and accurate statements alone are inadequate for the full accomplishment of the writer's purpose. There are occasions when he plans not so much to inform or instruct, as to move his reader. This purpose is illustrated in numerous valuable forms of business writing, but especially in sales letters, in which the aim is to stimulate favorable action, and in which, therefore, it is fatal to assume the existence of reader interest. As the need of persuasion increases, the necessity for arousing interest becomes more urgent. The style is modified by supplementing bare facts with emotional and other appeals that intrigue the reader.

It is not sufficient, for example, to mail matter-of-fact folders or booklets to prospects, and then sit back and wait for orders. Even if every paragraph in such advertising media is accurately and clearly phrased in every detail, the manu-

facturer has no assurance that the prospect will read, or send in orders if he does read. Hence the style of sales messages must be adapted to the primary function of sales writing, which is to persuade the reader to act.

The same is also true of reports and book reviews which aim to influence the reader's course of action. By adding recommendations to the report, or by vividly suggesting the high value of a book to certain classes of business people, the writer seeks definitely to influence his readers. Collection letters and letters of adjustment likewise aim to mold opinion.

In such persuasive writings, the bare data, facts, and abstract ideas must be clothed in flesh and blood if they are to make a human appeal.

The persuasive style is based on suggestive, picture-making words that stimulate the reader through an appeal to his imagination. Power is added when the writer approaches his reader, not through the dry light of the understanding, but rather "through that humid light which clothes itself in the mists and glittering iris of human passions, desires, and genial emotions."

These qualities are illustrated in the following selection. Compare and contrast it with the illustration of literature of knowledge.

What interested us was the intense way in which he later studied a page advertisement in the magazine he held in his hand. It appeared to fascinate him; he smiled and chuckled; he rubbed his chin and nodded sublime approval. He finally turned to us and held the advertisement for us to examine.

"Isn't that great!" was his enthusiastic comment. "The artist who drew that certainly knew folks. What gets me about it is the fishing set; those little tin swans and trout and turtles, painted as natural as can be. That's what I first noticed. Toys haven't changed much since I was a boy. I had a set of exactly those same rigamajigs when I was the age of that lad in the picture."

Here was one of the legion to whom advertising is addressed, and out of all the innumerable advertisements, he had settled on this one, with a sort of sentimental attachment, paying it handsome tribute. A most potent appeal, it seems to us, is the sentimental appeal.

Conclusion.—In establishing the correct point of view toward the problem of business writing, this chapter has stressed the following points: (1) Business English is an adaptation

of standard English to the needs of business. As one of the useful arts, business English is a means of securing practical results. (2) The successful writer knows and applies the rules and principles which make up the science of composition. (3) The problems of oral and written expression are different. (4) Practical imagination is a vital part of the writer's equipment. (5) Modern business writing is conditioned by the service point of view. (6) The style of business writing varies according to whether the writing classifies as literature of knowledge or literature of power.

Exercises for Class Discussion.

1. Make a list of ten business words and phrases. Explain why they cannot be classified as standard English. Why should these terms be avoided ordinarily in advertisements and general business correspondence?

2. In the light of your conclusions in the previous exercise, what is the significance of the second paragraph in the following selection? Can you simplify the first paragraph by making it easier to read? Does the writer shift the burden to the reader? Why?

The answer is furnished authentically by laboratory comparisons of the latest high-powered Franklin motor with the Series 10-B motor, its predecessor, which show, as stated in the report of Professor A. H. Lockwood of Sheffield Scientific School, Yale, that increase in horsepower has been accomplished without any sacrifice of fuel economy at corresponding speeds.

Translated into owners' language, this means that the Series 10-C car, operated at 30 miles an hour, for instance, gives the same economy as a Series 10-B car running at the same speed. The same would hold true at corresponding speeds either higher or lower.

3. Use the following advertisement as the basis for oral presentation of the case before your classmates. Develop the case so that you can present it winningly. Is your oral appeal longer than the printed appeal? Did you add new talking points? Or did you amplify the points in the printed appeal? Why is the oral appeal necessarily longer?

Get your Kodak out. An ideal time for picture-making is autumn. *Whether* it's a *hunt* or a *hike, have your Kodak* ready for the pictures you're sure to want.

4. Why do large corporations publish statements like the following? Consider (*a*) profit, (*b*) service, (*c*) good will. Point out how the intended result is accomplished through (*a*) choice of material, (*b*) phrasing.

(1) What becomes of the millions of dollars received by a large organization like the General Electric Company?

More than 40 cents out of each dollar goes in salaries and wages to G-E men and women—scientists, engineers, salesmen, and other workers.

Not quite 5 cents goes in cash dividends to the owners of General Electric—37,000 investors, 16,000 of them women.

(2) For each dollar which an employee puts into its Savings and Investment Fund, General Motors contributes 50 cents, and pays 6% interest on the amount standing to the employee's credit.

Today over 45% of the eligible employes are participating in this plan; and those who began saving in 1919 will this year receive better than a two-for-one settlement on the amounts they paid in. A big corporation is just an army of "folks," and the quality of its product is bound to be better when men and women have the opportunity to make steady financial progress.

(3) Two cents out of one dollar of sales means prosperity for meat packers. On such small profit has been built the great industry which markets a nation's live stock throughout the whole world, rendering good service to producer and consumer, and fair dividends to investors. What is the truth about profits in the packing business?

(4) More and more, as the years roll by, we realize that the things by which we are set apart from our fellows—ability, success, money—are as nothing in comparison with those things which draw and hold us together with a common bond—friendship—helpfulness—and loyalty. It is with this thought that we extend to our friends Hearty Greetings for the New Year.—*The Pusey and Jones Company, Wilmington, Delaware.*

5. Do the following paragraphs reveal imagination? Is imagination reflected in (1) point of view, (2) subject-matter, (3) words and phrases? Just how?

(*a*) (A woman is about to polish a hand mirror.) She says, "In half a second, little mirror, *you'll* sparkle too. No question about it, Bon Ami is a marvel for mirrors—big or little."

Contrast: Bon Ami is unsurpassed as a polishing agent for all kinds of mirrors.

(*b*) Quick, simple, safe, Bon Ami simply blots up the dust and streaks.

Contrast: Bon Ami removes dust and streaks—quickly, simply, and safely.

(*c*) You'll never forget the night you first tune in your Atwater Kent Radio. The thrill of the experience will live in your memory—the sheer delight of filling your room with living voices or the music from an orchestra perhaps a thousand miles away.

(*d*) Get a Kingston Heater, and make your car as warm and cozy as your home. The Kingston is making thousands of happy winter drivers all over the country. It means comfort at zero.

(*e*) The Alcazar Quality Kitchen Range—the range for all seasons—burns gas, and coal or wood. You have a warm kitchen in winter—cool in summer—comfortable between seasons.

6. Just how do the selections in Exercise 5 show adaptation to the reader? In each one, did the writer consider the reader primarily? exclusively?

Chapter II

THE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF BUSINESS WRITING: CONSIDERATION: CONSTRUCTION

Clearness and interest, as ideals of style, are realized by observance of the seven essential qualities of business writing: (1) consideration, (2) construction, (3) compactness, (4) correctness, (5) character, (6) concreteness, (7) cheerfulness. Business writings carry conviction in proportion to the writer's ability to incorporate these seven essential qualities, which apply in varying degrees, according to the type of writing.

Consideration is the most important of these qualities and so heads the list. The first step in planning a letter or report is to discover the reader. The message cannot be intelligently composed until the writer knows the temper of the person or persons to whom his message is directed.

Construction, the second essential quality, controls the selection and arrangement of material for the plan of the letter, article, or report.

Formulation of a plan is an indispensable preliminary step to the act of writing. Before the writer puts pencil to paper, he ought to have clearly in mind: first, his reader; and secondly, the logical sequence of ideas, facts, and illustrations constituting the material of his writing.

Every article, report, or letter must be an organic unit. As such it should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. To the inexperienced writer the foregoing statement of an important rhetorical principle may sound like a platitude. Seasoned writers, however, appreciate the difficulty of applying the principle successfully in practice.

Before he begins to phrase his material, the writer selects and organizes it in conformity with a definite purpose. He finds a plan. When each structural unit is clear in itself, and in its relation to every other unit, the logical plan leads the

reader from a well-defined opening to the gist of the message, and from that to a significant close. It is necessary, then, in the process of planning, to find an opening which will prepare the reader for a favorable reception of the message, to develop the principal thought so that the reader will be definitely impressed, and, finally, to clinch the main point in such a way that the reader will agree with the writer.

The importance of planning cannot be overstated. It is, for example, commonly believed that the advertising manager, or whoever writes the sales letters, enters his office in the morning, withdraws from the world of affairs to meditate and write, and toward the close of the afternoon emerges with copy containing a full-blown sales letter. This romantic notion is based on a misconception of the true duties of a correspondent. Unfortunately, many young writers actually approach the problem in this mood. They assume that a sales letter need merely be written to be produced. They forget that putting the letter on paper is the last of five essential steps in the process of composition (the word means "setting together, assembling").

At the outset, many fail in composition because they have not learned to clear the mind for larger considerations. The writer who worries about the details of expression while he is trying to solve the logical problem of structure, divides his attention at a time when he should concentrate it. The logical processes of thought governing selection, arrangement, and stressing of letter material should have been completed before attention is given to the details of expression.

While formulating the plan, the efficient writer frees his mind of all worries about language. He leaves the problem of phrasing until after he has determined upon the underlying plan. This procedure is necessary because the logical elements of composition cannot be analyzed adequately while the mind is occupied with the mechanics of style. The fact is that structure and style offer two distinct problems, each involving its own characteristic mental activity. When an attempt is made to organize and to phrase the material simultaneously, mental friction results, with loss to both logic and style. Such irritating and wasteful efforts can be avoided if the writer attends first to *prevision* and then to *revision*.

Prevision governs the processes of thought concerned with

the constructive elements of the letter: what data to select, how to arrange them, where to begin, how to proceed, how to close. To look ahead, to select, to outline, to organize, to plan the available material is to satisfy the requirements of prevision. Therefore, before he begins to write, let the writer have a definite outline, either in his mind or on paper.

Revision, on the other hand, involves attention to the details of language. The choice of language is guided, first, by established rules governing the mechanics of writing, and then, secondly, by the good sense and fine feeling of the writer in his selection of vivid, forceful, and compelling words and phrases. Because this problem of style differs essentially from the problems involved in the constructive activities demanded by prevision, and in the best practice is treated after them, it is discussed separately in the succeeding chapters.

The steps leading to the completed plan involve careful attention to the demands of *consideration* and *construction*. The theory and practice set forth in the following paragraphs, although focused on the sales letter, apply with equal force to other forms of business letters. Special applications to the various types of business letters and reports are discussed in later chapters.

Consideration.

Consideration of the reader is a prerequisite to success. An age which features service as the distinguishing trait of good business, and which looks upon every letter as a selling letter, insistently demands writers who take a sympathetic view of the reader's tastes, desires, and needs. The word "sympathy" means "fellow-feeling." To sympathize with your reader is, then, to "feel with" him. The successful writer has the knack of getting in tune with his reader because he imaginatively puts himself in the reader's place.

Visualizing the reader.—Such consideration is the result of visualization. An act of the imagination is required to stir up a lifelike image. Be a *see-er*. Visualize the reader in his surroundings. You must not waste time and effort in a futile attempt to write winningly to an impersonal abstraction. Somehow, you must get a vivid conception of a real flesh-and-blood man.

The "you" attitude.—Consider, furthermore, that the reader is absorbed in his own problems. He reads your letter in the light of his profits and his personal or business needs. Unless your letter gives adequate consideration to his problems, you cannot hope for a favorable reaction. Therefore the "we" attitude has been replaced in modern correspondence by the "you" attitude, which means simply that the writer is accustomed to "other" himself.

The point is that the letter cannot fulfill its mission unless it is directed to an individual human being. Thousands of letters never convince because they are not written with an individual reader in view. Like Edward Bok, the writer assembles his material with an individual in mind—a housewife, a banker, a farmer, as the occasion demands. Thus the acquisition of information concerning the reader constitutes the second essential step in the writing of the letter.

Finding the reader.—You must know something about your reader's personality and needs. Or if you are writing to a group—as to farmers in Iowa, apple growers in Oregon, or shoe manufacturers in New England—discover the individualizing characteristics of the group.

A university in Pennsylvania was about to open a night school for factory workers. A likely faculty member was delegated to write letters urging workers to make use of this opportunity. He made several attempts, but could not get beyond formal statements and glittering generalities. Then a light dawned upon him. He realized that he had never really known a mechanic. He hastened to the nearest factory, where he spent several days in conversation that gave him a line on the average intelligence and needs of a shop worker. Then, but not until then, he wrote letters that sold the new evening school to factory workers.

Practical psychology.—A broad and sympathetic understanding of human nature is an indispensable equipment for the qualified correspondent. The more he knows of the practical aspects of psychology, the better able he is to cope with the problem of understanding the prospect. Space limitations preclude discussion, but the student is referred to the following standard books: (1) "Advertising and Its Mental Laws," by H. F. Adams; (2) "Advertising and Selling," by H. L. Hollingworth; (3) "The Mind of the Buyer," by H. D. Kit-

son. The knowledge of human nature gained from the study of psychology should be focused on the individual prospect.

Individualizing the reader.—There are numerous practical ways of securing vital information about the prospect. Four will be given, in the order of their availability.

1. Study the *correspondence files.* If you are keen on clues, as you must be if you aim at success in letter writing, and if you can read between the lines, you will find abundant material in departmental correspondence with the prospect.

2. Some firms use *information cards* filled in by their traveling salesmen. These cards are so printed as to record information concerning the personality and business needs of individual business men. Information gleaned from such cards should be supplemented by personal talks with the salesmen.

3. In establishments where the sales letter is really a vital part of the system, sales correspondents make a practice of going on the road for a month or so each year. Thus they secure *first-hand knowledge* of the men to whom they must write during the remaining eleven months.

4. Take into account the nature of the prospect's business, and also racial and geographical considerations. The habits of thought, for example, of a Swedish hardware dealer in Minnesota are not necessarily like those of a Yankee hardware dealer of the same standing in New England. The hardware dealer in New York or Chicago differs in many ways from the dealer in Georgia or Texas, personally and in his methods of doing business.

Adapt the product to the reader.—If what you write is skillfully adapted to the reader, he will be interested and responsive. Adaptation means adjusting the message to the individual on whom it is desired to make an impression. Adjustment is always necessary, and the writer must make it. It is his duty to harmonize two equally important items: the reader to be impressed, and the materials for the impression.

Adaptation is necessary in all types of business writing. Every business article, report, and letter is directed to an individual or well-defined group of individuals. To secure a reading, the writer adjusts himself to the point of view of the audience. Thus a technical article written by an expert statistician for *The Wall Street Journal* on the probable volume of production in the automotive industry during 1925-1926 would

be out of tune in *The Saturday Evening Post*. The readers of one magazine are accustomed to technical treatment of a technical problem, whereas the readers of a more popular magazine demand a simplified but colorful and entertaining presentation.

The same principle applies to the individual. A collection letter to a highly rated debtor differs in several essentials from a letter to a poor risk. The sensitive debtor is not accorded the same treatment as the callous debtor. A sales letter to jobbers differs radically from a letter selling the identical product to women. The reader's age, sex, occupation, environment, and habits are carefully considered in their influence on establishing the productive point of view toward the reader.

Adaptation in substance, structure, and language.—Genuine consideration influences substance, structure, and language. Adaptation is reflected in all three. You must consider, first, the appropriateness of particular details to the reader addressed: their suitability to the purpose of your writing. Likewise, secondly, the writer's purpose and the reader's needs dictate the arrangement of these selected details. Thirdly, a skillful writer meets the requirements of adaptation by adjustment in manner and phrasing.

The problem of adaptation is concretely illustrated in the following Ayer advertisement, the purpose of which is not to sell the product on which the advertisement is based, but to interest manufacturers in the modern methods employed by the Ayer advertising agency. Note how well the subject-matter, structure, and language are adapted to accomplish this purpose.

"Why," asked Mrs. Oscar Smith of her next-door neighbor's husband, "why will my milk and butter not keep sweet in my ice-box?"

Next-door neighbor's husband was a professor of physics. He replied, "The 'W' in the equation, W=Q1—Q2, is too small."

Scientifically, "Q1" equals the amount of heat at the beginning of any refrigerating operation and "Q2" equals the amount of heat after the cold air has passed through the system. "W," the difference, is the efficiency index of the refrigerator.

In the formula, the physicist finds the key to the solution of all refrigeration difficulties.

In the translation of W=Q1—Q2 into terms of butter, eggs, milk,

and ice, which millions of Mrs. Smiths can clearly understand, we found the key to the advertising for the Gibson Refrigerator Company, of Greenville, Michigan.

The Gibson campaign for 1925 will put Gibson refrigeration so clearly that even the little Smiths will understand it.

Thus the first step in planning is to make oneself thoroughly familiar with the reader or readers. Then, but not until then, the writer is ready for the second step in planning his report, article, or letter.

Construction.

Five steps lead to the actual writing of the letter: (1) know your product, (2) find the corethought, (3) find the supporting material, (4) find the appeal, and (5) assemble your data. The sixth and last step is to write the letter.

1. **Know your product.**—Convincing letters are built by men who know what they are writing about. The first step, therefore, is to familiarize yourself with the product or service the letter is to sell.

Without a complete and detailed knowledge of the underlying facts, the writer cannot have confidence in what he attempts to sell. Lacking confidence, he will also lack enthusiasm. Both are indispensable, for without them the letter cannot present the message in a direct and convincing manner.

Your initial duty, then, is to know your product. You must, first of all, establish fresh contact with the raw material of your letter. Familiarity with factory methods and processes enhances your sales appeal by giving it a desirable solidity of substance. The bare facts, however, are not sufficient. Contact with men who control processes and distribution awakens enthusiasm. Talks with mechanics who do the work, and with the foremen and managers who control and guide the work, will serve to give you the production point of view. These men are proud of their product, believe in it, do their best thinking for it. After five o'clock they plan ways of improving it.

If your letter is concerned with automobiles, learn all you can about the selection of raw material. Talk long and often with the manager who buys the bearings, and with the men

who test them, select them, and put them into the car. Visit the painting department. Observe also how the upholstery is made, so that you may know something about the coach work. Understand how the car is assembled. Ride in the automobile. Drive it up hill and down hill and through congested streets.

Or if your letter is to sell food products, haunt the purchasing department. Examine the raw material as it enters the factory. See what becomes of it in the process of change to the finished, marketable product. If you know from observation and from tasting the food, that "pure" on the labels really means purity, you are in a position to write confidently and persuasively.

It is the refuge of the inefficient to ascribe to the caprices of fortune the deserved promotion of adjustment managers, advertising managers, and sales-copy writers who began their careers in the engineering department of an automobile plant, or in the kitchens of a food factory. Such men were promoted not merely because they could write, but fully as much because they knew the product thoroughly and were enthusiastic about it.

It is unreasonable to expect substantial, enticing letters from a man whose information is based merely on a bowing acquaintance with goods, or on hearsay knowledge of processes.

Genuine faith in your product will remove many of the mountainous obstacles in the way of the writer of successful letters. To win that faith, you must dig and delve for the facts.

One paragraph based on first-hand knowledge carries more conviction than a whole page of "radiant moonshine" or sky-blue fancies.

When you assume the responsibilities of a correspondent in a large factory, you may, to your advantage, report in overalls and flannel shirt to spend several weeks on the factory floors. The necessity for this preliminary survey may be contrary to your romantic notions of what is done in pursuit of the useful art of writing sales letters close to one hundred per cent in form and expression. Success in correspondence—like success everywhere—is achieved only at the price of a thorough devotion to the details of one's work.

A letter, like a beautiful poem, is not to be produced by the mere act of writing it. Behind it, as behind everything worth while, lies a wide background of knowledge and experience. Longfellow, the poet-teacher, bears witness to this in one of his letters. He has in mind those people who see education from afar and speak of it in glowing terms. He reminds them that, in reality, they see only the finished pictures; that in the work rooms, which they cannot see, there is the less agreeable preparatory work of grinding the paints and the oils, and the pulling of hair from the camel's back to make brushes. Longfellow was right. The glowing sentences in completed sales copy are the result of patient, honest, hard work behind the scenes.

Analyzing the product.—The following headings, which are suggestive, do not exhaust the possibilities in any one industry. The accompanying illustrations are, of course, based on a thorough study of basic data.

A. Raw materials.—The *source of supply* is often important to the consumer:

Many long miles were traveled—over land and sea—that you might enjoy a fine flavor in Maxwell House Coffee.

Compare:

From contented cows.

Or:

Milch cows of the highest grade supply the milk for Peter's.

A high quality of raw material is always reassuring:

The perfection of Campbell's Tomato Soup starts with the tomatoes. We grow and perfect them. By years of study and effort we have produced the best kind to make the best tomato soup.

Or:

Of the scores of varieties of cocoa beans, only six go into Peter's—and only certain grades of these.

Cost often reflects the high quality of raw material:

During twenty years of tobacco buying, I have never "figured" whether I could afford to buy the kind of tobacco that insures the quality of La Palina. I ask myself one question: "Is this tobacco fine

enough for La Palina?" If it is, I buy—if not, some one else may have it.

The quantity available is pertinent evidence:

I keep on hand as a protection against poor crops, more than three and a half million dollars' worth of tobacco that I know is fine enough for La Palina.

B. Manufacturing stages.—Factory processes are interesting as inside evidence:

Grape-Nuts is almost all pure carbohydrates (three-fourths)—and by a special slow-baking process of many hours, these carbohydrates have been turned into *dextrins,* of all food substances the ones that are most easily and quickly used by the body for nourishment.

The machinery used supplies relevant material:

This pure milk is blended with the chocolate in big mixing kettles, just as it comes hourly, fresh from the farm.

Sanitation is a vital problem in the production of foodstuffs:

Carnation milk insures good cooking, for it is *insured* milk—always pure and safe.

High standards of workmanship are reassuring:

Even today, only foremen thoroughly trained in Swiss methods have charge of the work.

Or:

A candy that is so delightfully dainty as Park & Tilford's has to be made with the greatest of care. So we employ over four hundred chefs and maids in our kitchen to mix and cook the candies, and to add those little fancy dabs and curlycues that mean so much to eye and appetite.

The *cost* may involve, for example, a large outlay for research that improves the product:

In its research laboratories General Electric invests more than a million dollars a year.

Close supervision safeguards manufacturing processes:

Each division of Buick production is guarded by a corps of engineers and assistants. Every unit and every part, down to the smallest washer, is designed and checked by Buick engineers.

C. Finished products.—

Quality:

In every price division, the emblem, *Body by Fisher,* conveys precisely the same meaning. It always signifies the very highest in value, soundness, and style, as conceived by body-builders whose facilities, skill, and experience have no parallel.

Price:

The Hupmobile Eight is the happiest balance between price and highest possible efficiency—the first Eight in which highest quality is joined to economy and a moderate price.

Service:

Above are illustrated only a few of the many special tools designed and built by Hupmobile for its hundreds of service stations throughout America. These special tools, plus the Hupmobile flat-rate system, enable Hupmobile mechanics to save minutes, and in some cases hours, on a given job.

Design:

Your brake lining is attached to the brake bands by rivets. If these rivets are not of the right design and *countersunk,* they project and cause many brake troubles. Projecting rivets score the brake drums, or rip the lining and produce uneven wear.

Every product or service has distinguishing features. Analysis of basic data reveals these. Analysis is not complete until the writer has found the distinguishing characteristics, for it is obvious that he must not lay emphasis on qualities common to all or many competing products. To do so would be to advertise competitive goods to the same extent as his own.

Comparison with similar products reveals individualizing features in your product. To discover how your product differs favorably from competing products, draw up, in parallel columns, lists of the ways in which your product is like the products of your competitors. The ways in which your product differs are indicated by the headings that do not fit into the list of likenesses. This convincing material belongs to one or more of the headings noted in the preceding paragraphs.

Your product, for example, may have the advantage in quality, price, design, or service. As a result of your analysis

of a hotel problem, the differentiating features may suggest that a residence hotel, summer resort, or winter resort, should stress location and accessibility. Or instead, it may be found advisable to stress equipment for accommodating guests comfortably and at reasonable rates. Or the high class of the management and personnel may suggest that service should be used as the distinguishing feature.

2. Find the corethought.—The corethought is the central thought of the letter, the one best adapted to make a strong impression. It is found among the differentiating qualities which emerge from analysis of basic data concerning the product. The corethought is determined upon by analyzing the qualities of the product as viewed in their relation to the needs and desires of the reader. It is discovered in the process of harmonizing product and reader. Analysis of the differentiating qualities reveals several qualities, any one of which might appeal to the reader. Analysis of the reader reveals numerous needs and desires, one of which can be best satisfied by the product. The problem of the writer is to discover, among the differentiating qualities, that quality which specifically meets the reader's dominant need.

The experienced writer never confuses his reader by presenting several points in one letter. The most effective strategy is to concentrate upon that one appeal which is best adapted to secure a response. Analysis of a new type of widely advertised hatchet will disclose these facts: (1) The hatchet has a tempered steel head and blade; (2) The handle is made of sound, carefully selected hardwood; (3) The weight of the hatchet is just right for convenient use; (4) The handle is firmly attached to the head; (5) An adjustment screw keeps the handle securely attached to the head.

Analysis of data like the foregoing reveals several ways in which the hatchet is like other hatchets sold at the same price. Most hatchets have strong handles and well-tempered steel heads. Though the wood and the steel may be unusually strong in this hatchet, the average buyer pays little attention to sales copy based on these characteristics. He is, however, impressed by the adjustment screw. Past experience has taught him how irritating a loose handle is. Because it satisfies a real need, the adjustment screw differentiates this hatchet

from other hatchets. The adjustment screw, then, is the corethought (selling point) upon which the writer concentrates.

3. **Find the supporting material.**—The supporting facts cluster about the central thought. With the reader's character and needs always before him, the writer selects details to make the corethought attractive. From the mass of collected facts and ideas, he chooses only those points focusing directly and unmistakably on the central thought. He asks himself, "If I were this man, and sitting in his chair, what ideas and facts would persuade me?" Every detail that does not strengthen the desired impression is strictly excluded.

The nature of the product itself also has an important influence on the choice of supporting material. One kind of product can be more forcefully presented by means of an appeal to judgment; another by means of an appeal to the emotions. It is obvious at once that a letter selling a farm tractor presents a different problem from one selling apple butter; and both are rather different from one selling smokers' articles or a raccoon overcoat.

In each instance the product definitely influences the choice of supporting data. When a product is costly and classifies as a utility, like the tractor, the writer chooses substantial, verifiable data, and many of them. When, on the other hand, the article satisfies a desire rather than a personal or business need, a few details that have atmosphere and color make a quick appeal.

The decision as to the choice of supporting details depends upon the answer to two questions:

1. Is the product classified as a necessity or as a luxury?
2. Is the prospect a potential buyer because he must meet a need? Or does he wish to satisfy a desire?

4. **Find the appeal.**—There are two ways of using details to stress the corethought:

1. Appeal to reason. This is the mental approach.
2. Appeal to desire. This is the emotional approach.

Which appeal is more effective? If the letter is to sell a serviceable product like a farm tractor, the best procedure is to convince the farmer by presenting data and arguments emphasizing the superiority of your tractor in satisfying his needs.

If you are selling tooth paste, you can appeal to the judgment of the user by stressing the *convenience* of using the paste flat on the brush; or you can prove that your paste insures *health* by destroying germs or preventing acid mouth. Whatever the central selling point, the letter is built around it in such a way as to appeal to the judgment of the prospect.

The appeal to judgment is called the *reason why* appeal. It gives the farmer opportunity to think about what you write concerning, for instance, the durability of the tractor. Or you may play up one of the following: low initial cost, low upkeep, sturdy construction, ease of operation, surplus power for hillside work (if this applies to the prospect). Your appeal gives him an opportunity to weigh your arguments and to test the validity of your data. He is constantly asking himself whether your product satisfies his needs. His one consideration is utility.

The appeal to the emotions is called the *short circuit* appeal. It suggests immediate action by means of an action-stimulating attack on the emotions. It aims to secure snap judgment by presenting the product so persuasively as to create or satisfy desire.

The *reason why* appeal is better adapted to satisfying needs (business or household); the *short circuit* appeal is better suited to satisfying longings and desires of a more personal nature. Jewelry, smokers' articles, fur wraps, foods that gratify taste rather than provide nourishment, these things and many more like them are readily sold by means of the *short circuit* appeal.

In instances like those just mentioned, it is not necessary, usually, to create desire, for it already exists. The problem is to associate your product so strongly with the prospect's desire as to make him purchase your product and no other.

Food products may be sold on the basis of either appeal. You can prove that your cream tomato soup is really made with cream from the dairy. You can convince the housewife that your ketchup or baking powder contains no harmful substance. You may, on the other hand, appeal to the emotions by calling up memories treasured by the prospect because he is human and sentimental. This is the appeal used by bakers who tell you that their bread is as wholesome and delicious as

the bread mother used to bake. The manufacturer of jam calls up memories of the jam bread you used to eat after school in boyhood days. You can still enjoy that rich flavor —if you buy Blank's wholesome, delicious, appetizing grape jam or apple butter. "Spread it on thick."

5. **Assemble your data.**—The writer is now prepared to begin the composition of the letter. He is not, however, quite ready to write. One more step is necessary. He must organize his material. This means careful grouping according to an effective plan.

The writer who rushes ahead without a plan produces a rambling letter which, except by chance, confuses the reader. A good slogan, therefore, is, "Plan your letter." Carefully grouped thoughts assure a definite impression. Professor Gardner has well said that the "letter which is rightly planned leads the reader along a path that has been prepared in advance to conduct him to a desired goal."

The letter is built around the selling point. Every sentence, every paragraph, in fact every word and phrase, must focus on the selling point. Nothing should be admitted that does not contribute to a forceful, convincing amplification.

Instead, then, of plunging directly into writing, the writer sketches the structural units by means of pencil jottings. In this way he can make certain that the reader will really follow him easily from the first sentence to the last. The most effective arrangement varies according to the kind of material used. The best general plan is (1) to begin where the letter finds the reader, and (2) to lead him step by step to where a favorable response is assured.

Every writing, as has been observed, must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. These three distinct steps are fundamental to all types of writing.

Beginning.—The opening sentence makes the situation clear and prepares the reader for a favorable reception of the message. The tone of the first sentence wins the reader's attention or keeps him from reading at all. In the opening sentence, then, the writer gets in tune with the reader.

The beginning of the sales appeal, for example, attracts attention by arousing the curiosity of the reader. If the first sentence does not take hold, the prospect will not read the

letter. The opening statement needs to be interesting and relevant. Apt beginnings are assured if the writer begins (1) by putting his interest among the interests of the reader; (2) by using the "you" approach. (See page 159 for attractive opening sentences.)

Middle.—The succeeding sentences contain the gist of the letter. They develop the corethought clearly and persuasively. In this section of the letter you can use those details you have chosen to make a strong appeal to the prospect's need or desire for the product. The aim is to match the desires of the prospect with the attractiveness, reliability, or low cost of the product.

The prospect must also be convinced. Most people desire good things, but wish to be certain that they make no mistake in purchasing your product. If you use the *reason why* appeal, you can bring forward evidence by way of pertinent data concerning quality or cost, or both. Or you can quote the testimony of users. Samples and guarantees are also effective. As only one of these appeals can be used in a single letter, choose the one which is most suitable.

End.—The closing sentences stress the corethought. They clinch the main point. The close of the letter makes the corethought impressive. Many letters do not close, but taper off in a weak and wordy agglomeration known as the participial close. (See page 411.)

The close of the letter is less difficult to plan than the opening, but it is at least as important. If the close fails to stimulate action, the letter does not fulfill its mission. The close should be positive. It should make action easy.

The opening, then, gets the subject started, the middle develops the subject, and the close impresses it.

6. **Writing the letter.**—Now that the most important requirements of *prevision* have been satisfied, the mind is free to concentrate upon the problem of sentences and paragraphs. The material, sifted and arranged, is ready to be phrased. When the first draft is complete, it is laid aside for a few hours or, better, for a day. Then it is subjected to *revision* for correctness, compactness, character, and concreteness—essential qualities of business writing. The rules and principles governing these qualities are discussed in succeeding chapters.

Structural Units: Sentences and Paragraphs.

In the process of planning the first draft, close attention should be given to the sentence and the paragraph as units of expression. These smaller units are to be adjusted carefully to the complete writing considered as an organic unit. Each sentence must be clear and attractive in itself and in relation to its neighbors.

Sentence length and structure.—The sentence is the unit of construction. On it are based the paragraph and the writing as a whole. The length and structure of sentences, which demand serious consideration, are determined, first, by the number and kind of ideas necessary for the adequate expression of a single thought, and secondly, by the tone of the letter.

It is a good rule to hold, in the main, to short sentences. A short sentence contains fewer than twenty words, and a very short one fewer than fifteen words. In sales letters, short sentences are the rule because they stimulate action.

Just fill out the inclosed card and shoot it back (10). The "Long Wear" hose will come by parcel post (prepaid, of course) with no obligation to keep them (18). You can't lose a penny (5). I'm the one who is asking to send them (9). Won't you let me (4)?

Send the card now (4). Then sit back and watch results (6).

Where house character is conservative, as in a bank or well-established business, slightly longer sentences are effective. In the case of letters to professional men and women, where dignity and conservatism are important, longer sentences are preferable. (See letters in Chapter VII.) In adjustment and other routine letters, also, where force and stimulation are not the primary objectives, longer sentences are often necessary for careful exposition of the facts.

Sentence length, then, is a matter of adaptation. The most suitable length is the one best adapted to reach the mind and heart of the reader.

Sentence structure is determined by the nature of the thought to be expressed and by the emotional effect desired. It is obvious that a simple sentence, which contains one independent subject and one independent predicate, is best suited to the expression of a simple thought:

Your confidence in those "Long Wear" silk socks is gratifying.

A compound sentence, which contains two or more groups of words (of equal value) with one independent subject and one independent predicate in each group, is most effective for the expression of intimately related independent idea groups:

You cannot carry around samples of safes, machinery, or pianos, but you can sell them from pictures.

A complex sentence, which contains at least one group with one independent subject and predicate, to which is joined at least one dependent group with a subject and predicate, gives most accurate expression to a thought requiring careful shading of ideas (that is, containing qualifications or exceptions):

If the methods used in the collection letter offend the debtor to the extent that he is moved to protest, your position as creditor is, nevertheless, strengthened, for you can refer to an assumed error, which, if persuasively put forward in connection with assurances of good will, not only conciliates him but also makes him more responsive to your collection letter.

The periodic sentence, in which the main thought is not completed until the period is reached, is best adapted to produce a dignified, conservative tone.

In America, business life in the coming years can hardly be expected to offer so many easy roads toward business success as have appeared to the commercial wayfarer at every turn in years past.

These and other sentence forms have been kept alive for generations because men have found that each in its own way most accurately reflects the writer's thought. From the point of view of the average reader of business letters, simple and compound sentences are most effective since most minds are untrained and therefore incapable of following anything but an elementary train of thought. The busy man, moreover, devotes the minimum of time to his correspondence; consequently the writer does well to simplify his thought to assure quick understanding. The complex sentence, on the other hand, because it permits careful adjustment and fine shading of ideas in their exact relationships, is better for a clear-thinking, educated, and leisurely reader.

Variety in the length and structure of sentences is desirable

because it relieves monotony and therefore makes the letter more pleasant to read. It is essential, also, for accuracy. A writer, for example, seldom thinks along the line of four or five consecutive compound thoughts. Obviously, then, a monotonous series of *and* and *but* sentences is certain to misrepresent the underlying thoughts. Thus variety, besides being necessary for tone, is essential also for accuracy.

Sentences are clear in relation to one another if each sentence follows clearly from the one preceding and leads unmistakably to the one following. When the connection between sentences is not immediately obvious, the writer can recast the sentence or use link words and phrases such as *therefore, however, on the other hand, apparently then,* and so forth.

Paragraph length and structure.—The paragraph consists of a sentence or group of closely related sentences set off by indentation or double spacing. Although the paragraph is flexible as to length and structure, and therefore not subject to fixed rules, its uses are well defined. Broadly, it is a convenient mechanical device to aid in securing clearness of impression (mind values) and the desired emotional reaction (tone values). These considerations are vital to the letter plan.

By separating certain sentences from those that precede and follow, the writer makes certain that each thought group impresses itself as a unit upon the mind of the reader. Unless special considerations interfere, the number of paragraphs is determined by the number of steps leading the reader to the desired goal. This number does not always correspond to the main headings of the plan, but there are never fewer paragraphs than main headings. Compare the number of headings in "Organizing letter data" with the number of paragraphs in "Paragraph outline" (page 42). Whatever the number, each paragraph in any type of letter should mark a definite step forward.

Paragraph structure depends upon the nature of the material to be organized. In a letter about a delay in the delivering of goods, time order is most suitable for the paragraph setting forth date material.

Confusing: We notified you on January 18 that the shipment of your furniture might be delayed on account of the embargo. The order

which you sent us on January 15 was received at our office on January 17. We were unable to make shipment until February 10. On February 12 we mailed you the bill of lading.

Clear: The order which you sent us on January 15 was received at our office on January 17. We notified you on January 18 that the shipment of your furniture might be delayed on account of the embargo on everything but coal and foodstuffs. We were unable to make shipment until February 10. On February 12 we mailed you the bill of lading.

Like the letter as a whole, the paragraph may be developed deductively; that is, by beginning with a general statement and then bringing forward details and illustrations to convince the reader of the truth of this statement. Thus the following paragraph begins with a general proposition. This is supported by details.

Chicago territory is *Chicago Tribune* territory. Through this one great newspaper you can reach and influence the tremendous buying power of five great states—Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin. The 900,000 circulation of the *Chicago Tribune* literally blankets Zone 7. In Chicago and its suburbs *The Tribune* reaches an average of three out of every five families. In 137 cities of over 5000 population outside of Chicago, *The Tribune* reaches ½ to ¼ of all the families. In hundreds of smaller towns, served only by local weeklies, *The Chicago Tribune* is the daily paper of the community.

The reverse order, in which the writer begins with specific details and proceeds from these to the general statement, is often more striking.

Recently a well-known manufacturer ran a full-page color advertisement in *The American Weekly*. He offered a sample of his product for twenty-five cents. Just five days after the advertisement appeared, he had received more than forty-five thousand quarters through the mail. Color advertising pays, and it pays best in the pages of *The American Weekly*.

Focusing the letter data on the statement of greatest importance is to make use of the arrangement called *climax*.

Drive up Riverdale Avenue from Spuyten Duyvil to Yonkers and you will pass through the length of it. Note its rugged beauty—note its lovely lawns and fields, its views of the lordly Hudson and the Palisades, its hills, its dales, its lordly mansions of the Perkinses, the Morosinis, the Delafields, the Dodges, the Babcocks, the Douglases, and the smaller but

perhaps even more beautiful homes of the other leaders of wealth and fashion who make their abodes here.

Then stop between Spuyten Duyvil Parkway and 250th Street (or come up Spuyten Duyvil Parkway from Broadway), and see the most beautiful spot in all Riverdale:

FIELDSTON

Laid out and improved in medium and large building plots and arranged for the dwellings of people who can appreciate such things.

The writer may well give thought to *paragraph length* in its effect on the emotional reaction of the reader. It is pleasant to read a paragraphed letter because the paragraph rests the eye by breaking up the solid block occupied by the message.

Paragraph length has a definite influence on the tone of the letter as a whole. Short paragraphs speed up the letter. They give it a brisk air. Longer paragraphs, on the other hand, retard speed by demanding a more deliberate reading. The principle of adaptation must determine whether a letter should have mainly long or short paragraphs.

It is hardly possible to overestimate the DISPLAY VALUE of the paragraph. The reader pauses slightly longer at the close of the paragraph than at the period after a sentence. Thus the short paragraph has attention value. By isolating an important sentence, the writer emphasizes it. In a series of one-sentence paragraphs, each sentence receives attention as an independent unit. Letter writers can learn much from Arthur Brisbane's attractive editorials, which gain in clarity and force because of short paragraphs. Even in a letter where the long paragraph is used to reflect the main headings of the letter plan, an important sentence may be stressed by paragraphing it.

In a carefully planned paragraph the reader cannot lose his way from sentence to sentence. It is, however, one thing for the writer to perceive connections; it is quite another to make the reader see them instantly. So it becomes the duty of the writer to externalize logical connection. Parallel structure, holding to the same point of view, and repetition of important words are aids to the reader. When these are not practicable, use *link words and phrases.*

A representative list of connectives is given below. It is necessary to remember that they should not be used unless there is real need, for many links slow up the letter. As link words and phrases are not thought carriers, but merely fingerposts to guide the reader, they must always be among the first words of the sentence. They should, ordinarily, not be at the beginning, for they would there usurp an outstanding position to be reserved for emphasizing an important idea. Not:

Thus, in the final analysis, quality is most important.

It is better to say:

Quality is thus, in the final analysis, most important.

Link words and phrases.[1]—The following list is not exhaustive. There are many similar words and phrases in the English language. Because of the wealth of words, there is no excuse for poor connections between sentences.

First	Although	Quite as necessary
Again	He	Not so obvious
Further	She	Truly
Furthermore	It	Surely
Finally	This	Really
Lastly	That	In truth
Besides	These	In fact
Moreover	Those	Certainly
Next	For this purpose	Of course
After	To this end	Naturally
Too	With this in view	Indeed
Then	To bring about	For example
However	Therefore	For instance
On the other hand	Hence	Indeed
Notwithstanding	Then	Especially
On the contrary	Consequently	At least
Nevertheless	Accordingly	Specifically
In spite of	Equally important	In particular
Yet	More effective	At any rate.

[1] Observe how link words and phrases are used in the closing paragraph of the chapter on the sales letter.

Poor connection:

We had to consider the size of the watershed near Genesee. It was necessary to take into account the number of chemical plants on this shed.

Better:

We had, first, to consider the size of the watershed near Genesee. It was necessary, secondly, to take into account the number of chemical plants on this shed.

Better:

We had to consider the size of the watershed near Genesee. It was necessary, furthermore, to take into account the number of chemical plants on this shed.

Example of Letter Planning.

Problem.—Assume that you are president of a factory producing a well-known high-class automobile. You are responsible for the successful operation of the large automobile plant and of the highly organized system of distribution through exclusive dealer agencies in the United States and Canada. Assume, furthermore, that you must meet the serious difficulties caused by war conditions prevailing in August, 1918. At this time the automobile industry faced the necessity of going on a 100 per cent war-work basis. Production of cars had to give way to war work. Discuss the situation in a letter to the managers of your dealer organizations.

Analyze the problem.—To solve the difficulties of the situation, the problem must be analyzed.

1. To write: A letter informing dealers of the impending cessation of production.
2. Purpose: Prevent the disintegration of the dealer organization.
3. Given: Production must cease in order to make way for war work.
4. To persuade: That cessation of production does not force dealers out of business. (This, as the following analysis shows, is the corethought.)

Analyze the situation.—Analysis of the situation reveals the following basic data:

(*a*) *Factory:* (1) capital invested in the plant; (2) value of good will based on past performance of car; (3) War Industries Board demands 100 per cent war-work basis; (4) 2000 cars cancelled from production schedule; (5) 1900 cars left on production schedule; (6) restrictions on coal and materials tightened during past weeks; (7) car has established its position in the automotive industry; (8) factory organization is patriotic and therefore willing to go on a war basis; (9) the war must be won at all costs; (10) nationwide dealer organization for distribution of a high-priced car; (11) an efficient organization like this not built in a day; (12) factory has had several prosperous years; (13) price of remaining 1900 cars raised at once; (14) production may drag into next year on these.

(*b*) *Dealers:* (1) capital invested in the agency salesrooms, service stations, etc.; (2) good will based on service to the community; (3) War Industries Board has advised dealers to get on a war basis; (4) not more than three or four cars to a dealer during next six months or year; (5) automobiles now in use are essential to the speeding-up called for by the war program; (6) business in second-hand cars will develop; (7) dealer has service department that the government considers important.

Harmonize factory and dealer.—The purpose of the letter is to find ways and means to preserve the dealer organization. Analysis of basic data is made, therefore, to discover a practical plan for accomplishing this purpose. Analysis reveals several hopeful elements for the factory and for the dealer.

Consideration of the factory point of view reveals (1) that the plant will be kept running by war work, and (2) that the car holds so high a place in public estimation that it will not suffer from being off the market during the remainder of the war.

Consideration of the dealer's needs reveals certain outstanding points. Although the future looks dark to the dealer because his source of supply is cut off, there are definite reasons for hope: (1) in the fact that cars now in use are necessary in the speeding-up called for by the war program; (2) in the consequent development of business in second-hand cars; and (3) in the increased work for service stations.

The writer therefore reaches the sound conclusion that the dealer organization can be preserved and that it is worth while to urge a meeting of dealers at the factory, where they can confer together on the best plans.

Organizing the letter data.—To build up the corethought persuasively, the writer finds the structural units of the letter.

Beginning.—The best point of contact is a frank statement concerning the ruling of the War Industries Board as it applies to factory and dealer. Such a statement immediately makes the situation clear and prepares the dealer for what follows.

Middle.—Study of basic data indicates three groups of ideas. These constitute the logical units in the development of the corethought.

1. The attitude of the factory organization toward the ruling that clears the factory for war work is thoroughly patriotic. The effect on production is that 2000 cars are cancelled from the production schedule, leaving 1900 cars, which will come through slowly and which will be raised in price immediately.

2. The factory and dealers are in good shape for the change. Both have had several prosperous years. The car will not suffer from being off the market temporarily.

3. The difficulties for dealers are far from insurmountable: (*a*) used-car market will develop; (*b*) service will be increasingly demanded.

End.—The letter comes to a significant close in the practical suggestion of a dealers' meeting at the factory to consider ways and means.

Note that the foregoing analysis reveals five structural units.

The letter was written as follows:

August 21, 1918.

Mr. Glad E. Winston,
15 Burbage Place,
Yourcity, New Jersey.

Dear Sir:

Things have been moving rapidly of late.

As you know, the War Industries Board informed automobile manufacturers of the necessity of getting on a 100 per cent war-work basis. The other day, also, the Board gave a hearing to the National Dealers' Association, and, while no definite announcement was made, dealers were urged to get on a war basis.

The Fernald Company believes that the War Industries Board is fully justified in its stand. Conserving the automobile industry is nothing

compared to bringing the war to a rapid and satisfactory close. The new draft is going to give all of us a deeper realization of the seriousness of the job.

With automobile production out of the way, thousands of men and acres of floor space and machinery will be released for war work.

We have taken 2000 cars from our production schedule and have given the war work now in our plant the right of way over automobile production. There remain about 1900 cars which we will get out as fast as conditions permit. This means that the 1900 cars will come through slowly and may string along into next year. Prices on these cars will be immediately advanced.

To us the whole situation is a relief. Restrictions on coal and materials for anything but war work are being rapidly tightened. We are glad, anyhow, to work 100 per cent for Uncle Sam, and feel that we can now put our full energy into the war business. In fact, it should be a great satisfaction to all automobile manufacturers to get in and help clean up the war job ahead of everything else. We believe that the industry and the dealer organizations are in good shape right now for the change. We have all had several prosperous years.

The Fernald will not suffer. Its reputation is such that it can stay out of the market for the remainder of the war and come back strong when the war is over.

The difficulties in the way of meeting the new conditions are far from insurmountable. You have your service—that is important, and probably will be considered important by the Government, for it is recognized that the automobile is essential in the speeding-up called for by the new and enlarged war program. Furthermore, no one can tell how the business in second-hand cars will develop.

Would you favor a Dealers' Conference at the factory early in September for the purpose of discussing the situation and giving dealers an opportunity to confer together on the best plans?

Yours very truly,
THE FERNALD COMPANY,
President.

Paragraph outline.—To test the letter for proper distribution of material, sum up each paragraph in a short sentence. Each paragraph is a logical unit if it can be summed up in a short, unified sentence. The arrangement of paragraphs is logical if the unity sentences show that the thought advances progressively from a clear opening to a significant close.

1. Things have been moving rapidly of late.
2. The War Industries Board has directed manufacturers and dealers to get on a war basis immediately.
3. This action of the Board is approved by the factory.
4. The Board's ruling clears the factory for war work.
5. The effect on production is immediate.
6. The factory and the dealer are in good shape for the change.
7. The car will not suffer from being off the market.
8. The difficulties in the way of dealers are far from insurmountable.
9. Do you favor a dealer conference at the factory to consider ways and means?

Criticism.—(1) The letter faces a disagreeable situation frankly. The writer makes the best of an awkward announcement. (2) The point of contact is brief and apt. It ties up with an important fact that was grimly obvious to all business men in August, 1918. (3) Consideration of the dealer motivates the selection and organization of details. The point of view is cheerful throughout. The spirit of co-operation permeates every paragraph: co-operation with the Government, and with the dealer. The president turns darkness into light by definite suggestion of what the future holds for the dealer. The letter is, therefore, constructive. (4) The letter is clear, definite, and practical. Every sentence is clear in itself and clear in relation to its neighbors. The reader is comfortable throughout. (5) The nine paragraphs of this letter are attractive in their appearance on the letter sheet. The compact paragraphs are inviting in size. There is also variety in length. The sentences, likewise, show variety in structure and length, thus adding to the easy comprehension of thought. (6) The letter moves to a significant close in the practical suggestion of a dealer conference. The letter thus stimulates action. This action clinches the core-thought, namely, that the dealer organization can be preserved, by taking the thought out of the realm of speculation into the world of action. (7) The language is simple, straightforward, and dignified throughout. In place of flamboyant words and phrases that suggest the insincere "spread-eagle" type of patriotism, the writer shows restraint in dignified phrases that reflect the seriousness of the situation for all concerned in the business of manufacturing and selling automobiles. (8) The writer meets the issue in substance, structure,

and style. He satisfies the requirements of the War Industries Board, and thus does his duty patriotically. He satisfies the needs of his dealers, and thus does his duty in a businesslike way. Foresight, vision, and keen penetration are revealed in the way he has analyzed present conditions and prepared for future contingencies.

Exercises for Oral and Written Analysis.

1. The following letters represent an expert statistician's attempts to find the best approach to executives in the automotive industry. The letter, which is designed to lead to an interview, aims to sell the writer's expert knowledge of automobile production. Instead of selling tangible goods, it sells service. In its final form, the letter was mailed to six of the most prominent executives in the automotive field, four of whom responded.

First plan.—

Facts Worth Knowing.

If today you knew the answer to these questions, what would it be worth to you?
What is the motor industry going to do next year?
What are your sales going to be?
How many cars should each dealer sell?
How many cars should be produced each month?
How to remove the peaks and valleys from your production schedule.
How to avoid over and under production.
How to adjust your sales and production programs for the ups and downs before they occur.
These and many other questions of vital importance to you can be answered with accuracy.

Last year, upon my recommendation, the largest manufacturer of high-grade automobiles made a price reduction as a result of which they stopped a serious decline in sales and shrinkage in profits.

This year, the largest manufacturer of steel window sash has, up to July 1, shown gross sales but 2 per cent at variance with what I told them a year before they would be. Similarly a large publishing house has shown a gross business so far this year less than 2 per cent at variance with my prediction made a year ago.

How this has been done would take too long to describe in a letter.

I am now in a position to serve one or two more companies, as I have served the companies referred to above.

Second plan.—

If today you knew the answer to these questions, what would it be worth to you?

What will the motor industry do in 1925?
What should your sales be in 1925?
How many cars should you produce, month by month, in 1925?
How many cars should each of your dealers sell in 1925?

With dependable answers to these questions in your hands now, would you not be in a better position to remove the peaks and valleys from your production schedule, avoid both over and under production, and balance production against the ebb and flow of sales?

In conjunction with the recent crude rubber survey made under the direction of Secretary Hoover, the writer made a supplementary survey covering the yearly consumption of crude rubber by the automotive industry up to and including 1930.

For several years the writer has specialized in forecasting the business trend in motors, and is now offering his services to a few manufacturers who believe that foresight is better than hindsight in meeting conditions facing the industry.

Acting upon the writer's recommendation, one of the largest car manufacturers made, in 1924, a price revision which materially strengthened its position in the industry.

These principles, which have so successfully been applied to the automotive industry, can be applied also outside of the industry. Surveys of sales possibilities made at the beginning of this year for concerns in two entirely different industries, both far removed from the motor industry, have shown to date a variance of less than 2 per cent from actual sales.

The above problems are unquestionably as important to you as they are to other executives.

At your suggestion, the writer will gladly arrange for a discussion at length in your office, at your convenience.

Third plan.—

At this time of year, when the motor industry is formulating plans for 1925, such questions as the following are doubtless prominently before you:

What will the motor industry do in 1925?
What should my sales be in 1925?

How many cars should I produce, month by month, in 1925?
How many cars should each of my dealers sell in 1925?

With dependable answers to these questions in your hands now, will you not be in a better position to remove the peaks and valleys from your production schedule, avoid both over and under production, and balance production against ebb and flow of sales?

At the request of Secretary Hoover, and in conjunction with the recent crude rubber survey made under his direction, the writer made a supplementary survey covering the yearly consumption of crude rubber by the automotive industry up to and including 1930.

Acting upon the writer's recommendation, one of the largest car manufacturers made, in 1924, a price revision which materially strengthened its position in the industry.

The above problems are unquestionably as important to you as they are to other executives.

At your suggestion, the writer will gladly arrange for a discussion at length in your office, at your convenience.

The final plan.—

(Heading)

November 10, 1924.

Mr. James Fullerton,
President, Cadloc Company,
Yourtown, Michigan.

My dear Sir:

At this time of the year, executives in the automotive industry are formulating their plans for 1925. They are endeavoring to solve a number of problems, some of which are:

What is the motor industry going to do in 1925?
What are my sales going to be in 1925?
How many cars is each of my dealers going to take in 1925?

At least these are basic problems upon which the solutions of many others depend.

It is possible to determine not only how many cars you should produce in a year, but also how many cars you should produce each month, and how many cars each of your dealers should take each month.

The solution of such problems as these has already been accomplished for several firms, with highly satisfactory results. In one case, the difference between the forecast and the actual sales for the first six months was less than 4 per cent. In another case, the difference for

eleven months was less than 2 per cent. If such results can be obtained for other firms, they can be obtained for you.

Had such analyses been used by the motor industry during 1924, the decline of 20 per cent that occurred in the second quarter could have been foreseen and adjustments made for it.

With dependable solutions of these problems in your hands now, will you not be in a better position to remove the peaks and valleys from your production schedule and balance production against the ebb and flow of sales?

The writer is prepared to undertake the study of these problems as they affect your business.

As he expects to be in Yourtown during the week of November 16, he would appreciate the opportunity of discussing the matter with you in detail.

Very truly yours,

2. Write a paragraph outline for each of plans 1, 2, 3, and 4. Use the model on page 43. Then point out specifically how each plan shows improvement over the preceding plan. Consider the following:

(*a*) What questions were omitted from letter to letter? Why?

(*b*) What objection is there to the heading in the first plan?

(*c*) Precisely how is the whole opening of the first plan weak?

(*d*) Why was the phrasing of the opening in the first plan changed in the third plan? Why again in the final plan? Is the final plan best?

(*e*) What is gained by indenting the questions in the third and fourth plans?

(*f*) Justify the omission of three paragraphs in the third plan.

(*g*) Compare the sentence, in the third plan, beginning, "At the request of Secretary Hoover," with the sentence, in the second plan, beginning, "In conjunction with the recent crude rubber survey." Which sentence clearly reflects the thought? Why?

(*h*) Point out why the material in the third paragraph from the end in the first plan and in the second plan is irrelevant as it is phrased in these plans.

(*i*) Point out specifically how the close in the fourth plan is more effective than that of the first plan.

(*j*) Is the close of the second plan stronger than that of the first plan? Why?

(*k*) Just how was the egotistic "I" attitude of the first plan changed to the more convincing "you" attitude in the fourth plan?

(*l*) What is the corethought? State it in a sentence.

3. Write a criticism of the final plan, using the model on page 43.

4. Write a paragraph outline of the letter on page 324.

5. Point out the correct procedure for finding the corethought in the following problems, finding the corethought in each problem and phrasing it in a sentence: (*a*) Getting a man or woman to renew a magazine subscription. (*b*) Getting a business man, doctor, or lawyer to vote for a certain candidate. (*c*) Inducing a student to come to an important meeting.

6. Find the structural units in the letter on page 302. Use the model on page 41.

7. Extend the list of link words and phrases on page 38.

8. In the letter on pages 190-191, compare the number of structural units with the number of paragraphs. Why the difference in number? What was gained by separating the material of paragraph 4 from that of paragraph 3? Why is the material of paragraphs 6 and 7 divided?

9. Reparagraph the following sales letter to a superintendent of schools. Give a specific reason for each new paragraph. Apply the principles discussed on pages 35-37.

Dear Sir:

Will your high-school building be complete without a cafeteria? Of course, you want the new school you are planning so carefully to be a complete unit in every particular. Cafeterias are being installed in schools throughout the country by men who have come to realize the many advantages of having suitable facilities for providing school lunches. Health is necessary to success.

A strong physical body is the ideal home for the brain. A cold luncheon gulped down in some class-room corner is certainly not conducive to good digestion. The result is a muddled brain for the greater part of the afternoon session. Neighborhood lunch rooms are often unsanitary,

and, being maintained for profit, they are likely to charge prohibitive prices for the food which the student requires. Again, if left to his own judgment, the child will almost certainly eat an unbalanced ration, and in many cases purchase food which is actually harmful to his growing body. By maintaining a carefully supervised lunch room, the students in your school will be able to obtain wholesome, nutritious food at prices they can afford to pay. A hot luncheon eaten in pleasant and sanitary surroundings is an important aid to the proper assimilation of food. Your position as superintendent of schools might be compared to that of the manager of a manufacturing plant. Both of you have the development of the efficiency of your workers at heart. Installation of lunch rooms is almost universal among factories. If warm, wholesome lunches increase the efficiency of factory employees, they will do so doubly in the case of adolescent youth in the school. We maintain a staff of engineers and draftsmen engaged in developing lay-outs, specifications, and estimates for hundreds of school cafeterias throughout the country. The inclosed sheet is a model lay-out of a typical school cafeteria. We shall appreciate receiving a floor plan of the space you can devote to a cafeteria, with the idea of developing a lay-out for you especially suited to your needs.

This service is without obligation, as we shall gladly give our personal attention to developing your individual problem. Mr. Dooling, our Chicago representative, will be in Lake View within the next fortnight and will be glad to call on you, at any time you suggest, to offer his personal co-operation in every way possible. A stamped envelope has been inclosed for your use in replying.

Very truly yours,

10. (*a*) What is the corethought in the previous letter? (*b*) What is the purpose of the letter? (*c*) Write a paragraph outline of the reparagraphed letter. (*d*) Find the structural units of the letter. (*e*) How does the number of paragraphs compare with the number of structural units?

11. Arrange the following jumbled paragraphs in logical order. Explain how your arrangement makes reading easy and smooth.

(1) By ordering now you obtain:
   (*a*) A special discount of $2.00.
   (*b*) The First Series of the Britannica Home University Reading Courses.
   (*c*) A handsome bookcase in mahogany finish, free.

(*d*) The Encyclopedia Britannica, the world's greatest storehouse of knowledge, in 16 double volumes at a saving of 46%.

(2) Within the last eight months, 26,000 sets have been sold throughout the world. Less than 3,800 now remain to fill orders in this country.

(3) Are you going to be one?

(4) Action, therefore, is imperative, if you wish one of these fine sets.

(5) Seize this opportunity now before it is too late. Remember—a first deposit of only $5.00 will bring the complete set to you.

(6) We cannot reprint before autumn. Nobody knows whether it will be possible to renew the present offer at the same advantageous terms.

(7) Just 3,790 people will be able to obtain the Encyclopedia Britannica in the New Form while the present offer lasts.

(8) These orders are being received at the rate of more than 100 a day. The reader can calculate for himself how soon every set will be gone.

12. (*a*) State the corethought of the preceding letter. Use a short sentence. (*b*) Using the model on page 41, write an analysis to indicate the structural units of the letter. (*c*) Why are there more paragraphs than structural units? Be specific.

13. Paragraph the following letter, giving a specific reason for each paragraph.

Dear Sir:

In connection with your inquiry concerning policy 1985678, we are returning the annual premium receipt of January 27, which is valid. We have established a new district office at Dubuque, and as the territory where you now reside is operated by that office, the policy has been transferred to it. Future premiums may be remitted to Superintendent C. Banes, 270 Main Street, Dubuque, Iowa. That portion of your letter regarding the correct spelling of your name has been referred to another department for attention. You will hear from them in the course of a few days.

Very truly yours,

14. Study the paragraphing in the letters quoted on pages 363-65 to determine whether long or short paragraphs prevail, and whether their use has a good or bad effect on the tone of the letter.

Chapter III

THE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF BUSINESS WRITING: COMPACTNESS; CORRECTNESS

Compactness and correctness are essential qualities of business writing. A compact and correct letter or report is easier to read than one containing flabby sentences, ungrammatical expressions, misspellings, illogical punctuation, and other violations of the mechanical rules of writing. Such errors not only put obstacles in the reader's way, but they also reflect on the intelligence and general educational qualifications of the writer. An inaccurately phrased letter or report awakens the suspicion that the writer is likewise inaccurate in the analysis and presentation of underlying facts. Careful revision assures compactness and correctness in the mechanical details of expression.

Compactness.

Compactness is desirable for two reasons. It economizes time and brain energy. It adds force by concentrating attention.

Compactness means the inclusion of essential material in the fewest words compatible with clearness and correctness of expression. A wordy passage reflects loose thinking; a compact passage, close thinking. No amount of condensation in words can compensate for incompleteness of thought. A compact sentence, therefore, is comprehensive: it concentrates the maximum of thought in the minimum number of words. By incorporating essential ideas only, compact writing cuts through non-essentials to vital data, the sentences being well-knit because they are packed with relevant details. The weekly Ayer advertisements on the front covers of *Printers' Ink* are examples of brevity combined with completeness. These advertisements are models of compression. They are large in scope and contents, but small in space. Not one

word can be omitted without detriment to the thought, as in the following:

Tea appeals to the balmy side of man. It has a friendly habit of adjusting his moods with all the graciousness of a southern breeze.

In the Tetley Tea copy appearing now, Tetley's breezes into a man's mind at its southern exposure. Catches him drowsy on the sun-porch of a mood when he doesn't want to be argued with or made to think. Its great bell of a word, *Tetley's,* booms at him in big display. And little pithy phrases chime in with suggestions of bracing Tetley goodness.

In advertising there are north-northeast and south-southwest exposures too. Experience has taught Advertising Headquarters how to box the compass of appeal.

Flabby sentences are the curse of business writing. The spendthrift of words buries thought in a bog of verbiage, to the mystification and disgust of the reader. Hence, capable writers avoid surplusage. The watchword of business men has ever been, "Be brief."

Flabby: (1) The ordinary table salt you have been using, which does not pour out of the shaker on damp and rainy days, absorbs such an excessive amount of moisture from the air that it becomes sticky. (2) Unlike the ordinary run of table salts sold in the retail stores of the country, Blank's salt, we are proud to state, does not absorb sufficient moisture to make it sticky. (3) Blank's salt, which you can now purchase everywhere as conveniently as the inferior common salt, is, we wish to assure you, delightfully different from ordinary table salts in that it pours as easily and readily on damp days as on dry days.

Compact: (1) Ordinary table salt does not pour on damp days because excessive absorption of moisture makes it sticky. (2) Unlike ordinary table salt, Blank's does not absorb enough moisture to make it sticky. (3) Blank's salt is delightfully different. (4) It pours as readily in damp as in dry weather.

In less than fifty words the compact form expresses the central thought clearly and forcefully, whereas the flabby version buries the thought in over one hundred words. More than fifty of these are a drag on the thought. They are surplusage.

Analysis shows that the writer of the wordy passage has not planned his paragraph. In a muddled sentence he does finally reach the significant point at the close. He arrives, but by devious ways. Not one of his three sentences ap-

proaches the central thought directly. The reader is repeatedly led into byways, as, for example, in the phrases, *you have been using, from the air, run of,* which do not add either clearness or interest. Observe, on the other hand, the clear-cut third and fourth sentences of the compact version.

The first paragraph is weighted, furthermore, with gratuitous phrases like *we are proud to state,* or *we wish to assure you,* which contribute nothing to the progress of thought. The suggestion, moreover, *which you can now purchase everywhere as conveniently as common salt,* is irrelevant; and what is equally unfortunate, it is vague. Note also the wordy habit of using couplets, illustrated in the unnecessary repetition of ideas in *damp and rainy* and *easily and readily.*

Compactness, then, is as much a problem of clear-cut thinking as of effective phrasing. The old proverb tells us that brevity is the soul of wit, and here *wit* means *intellect.* The mind that firmly grasps the central thought together with its supporting ideas, inevitably limits expression to vital words and phrases.

In attempting to gain compactness, however, some misguided writers eliminate words essential to the smooth flow of thought. When correctness is violated through omission of indispensable words, the result is crude brevity, but not compactness. Tortured English results from over-abbreviation, as in the following illustration:

Bad: Your folders received from print shop this morning and have forwarded same. Regret delay, but did best possible under circumstances. (*This reads like a telegram.*)

Better: We received your completed order for 100,000 folders from the print shop this morning. The shipment is already on its way to you via Merchants' Dispatch. The slight delay has annoyed us, and we know it has you.

The practice of composing pithy advertising catches in imitation of age-old proverbs or modern advertising slogans reveals how force may be gained through compact phrasing. The successful slogan is a highly condensed statement of the central selling point. The aim is to compress a sales thought into a suggestive phrase or sentence. Contrast, for example, this forceful salt slogan with the forms on page 52.

Morton's Salt. When it rains it pours.

There is likewise a vast difference between the two statements below. Had Franklin stated his thought as in the first example, it would never have been accepted by the masses as a proverb.

Diffuse: If a man would only give heed to the small daily expenditures, he would not complain of quickly spending his handsome income.

Forceful: Many a small leak has sunk a great ship.

Gain force by placing the most important ideas at the beginning and end. These outstanding positions arrest attention. Avoid the inconspicuous middle positions.

Weak: An improved attachment, the Blank Crystal Set, which will assure you clear and loud tones, is sold by all radio dealers.

Forceful: The improved Blank Crystal Set, on sale at all radio stores, assures clear, loud tones.

Avoid colorless sentence openings.

Weak: There is nothing to equal Cup Tires for endurance, freedom from punctures, for the things a cyclist wants most from his tires. (The "there is" opening is ineffective.)

Strong: For endurance and freedom from punctures—for the things a cyclist wants most from tires—no tires can equal Cup Tires. (Here "endurance" and "Cup Tires" are stressed.)

Strong: For freedom from punctures, for endurance—for the things a cyclist wants most—there is nothing to equal Cup Tires. (Here *freedom from punctures* and *Cup Tires* are stressed.)

Words of direct action add force.

Weak: You are requested to mark all future orders for the attention of Mr. E. F. Walling, whose duty it is to see that your needs are promptly taken care of.

Stronger: Please mark every future order for the attention of Mr. E. F. Walling, who will take care of all your needs promptly.

Mechanical helps.—1. Reduce predication. Avoid unnecessary verbs.

Weak: Did you ever stop to think of the romance that may be found in the furniture you see each day?

Compact: Did you ever think of the hidden romance in your furniture?

2. Adjectives and adverbs often weaken the words they are meant to strengthen.

Weak: Without the sympathetic sales manager's helpful aid, the road salesman's job is altogether cheerless.

Compact: Without the sales manager's sympathetic backing, the road salesman's job is cheerless.

3. Condense a phrase or a clause into a forceful predicate.

Weak: In the inclosed folder, *which* pictures this chair, *you may see its* many unusual features.

Compact: The inclosed folder pictures the many unusual features of this chair.

4. Avoid unnecessary repetition of ideas (tautology).

Wordy: Time and money are of equal value to the *modern* business man of *today.*

Compact: Time and money are equally valuable to the modern business man.

5. Avoid logically superfluous words (pleonasm).

Clumsy: He took work along the lines of advertising.

Compact: He took work in advertising.

Better: He studied advertising.

Clumsy: We would appreciate it if you would make a prompt remittance.

Compact: We shall appreciate a prompt remittance.

6. Do not bury your thought in a mass of useless words.

Messy: We wish hereby to let you know that we fully appreciate the confidence you have reposed in us.

Better: We appreciate the confidence you have placed in us.

Manly and businesslike: We appreciate your confidence in us.

7. Do not weaken your statement by using many words when one word conveys the idea clearly and forcefully.

Confusing: We should like to notify you that a careful scrutiny of our books brings to our attention no record of such an order as you say in your letter of the 15th ult. you favored our firm with. (This sentence is unnecessarily difficult to read because the essential thought is buried in a mass of verbiage. The words *we find,* used below, adequately convey the idea of the italicized words.)

Compact: We find no record of your order of July 15.

8. Condense a phrase or a clause into a word.

Wordy: The folder which is inclosed will give you an idea of the construction of this boiler.

Compact: The inclosed folder gives you an idea of the construction of this boiler.

9. *Will* and *would* often weaken the sentence, especially when the future tense is not intended. The sentences in the preceding paragraph illustrate this fault and its correction.

Weak: Customers will sometimes get a false impression . . .

Strong: Customers sometimes get a false impression . . .

10. *Which* and *that* are not always necessary for clearness and accuracy. Omit them when the connection is clear without them.

Wordy: We are writing to ask whether the domestic science table *which we* shipped you on April 10 is the exact type *of table which* you need *for your purposes.*

Compact: We are writing to ask whether the domestic science table shipped to you on April 10 is the exact type you need.

Compactness is relative. There can be no absolute standard. A business letter that is compact (brief but complete) for one reader is not necessarily so for another. A letter to a banker or farmer may be longer, and still be compact, than a letter to a person accustomed to quick decisions. A nimble wit demands great compression; a slow-going, conservative mind needs additional matter on which to base a decision. What the cautious reader may justifiably condemn as ineffective lack of completeness, the impulsive reader may nevertheless praise as commendable brevity.

The alert business man, for example, who is crowded for time and accustomed to quick decisions, insists on short letters. He will not read, ordinarily, a letter of more than one page. The farmer, on the other hand, who is likely to sit down with his mail after the chores are done, willingly reads a letter of two or three pages. Letters to him are necessarily longer because he is not accustomed to quick decisions. The additional evidence required to influence his choice of product makes longer letters imperative.

Abraham Lincoln, when asked the proper length of a

man's legs, replied that a man's legs, in his judgment, should be just long enough to reach to the ground. The moral, as applied to the use of English, is obvious. The writer must use just the right number of words to convey his thought. He must not use fewer words, or there is a gap in the thought or thought sequence. He must not use more words, or the thought, imbedded in useless words, is hard to find.

Correctness.

Correctness is a humble but indispensable quality of style. Correctness has to do with details governed by established rules and well-defined conventions. As applied to business correspondence, such details involve not only the physical make-up of the letter, but also the mechanics of expression.

Language, it will be recalled, is a medium for conveying thought. Like window glass, language, at its best, is so transparent that the reader perceives the thought but is not aware of the language. Like flaws in glass, errors in expression prevent clear and easy perception. It is thus necessary to remove all obstacles that make the reader uncomfortable. When the medium is faulty or diverges noticeably from conventional practice, the mind is drawn from contents to expression. Such a shift is fatal to the success of the message.

Correctness is concerned, first, with the physical make-up of the letter. Physical make-up includes choice of paper stock, size of sheet, printed letterhead, and the headings of the letter, with their arrangement—in fact all details involved in the distribution of material on the sheet. Because letter form has been standardized to the point where it is conventional and therefore unobtrusive, departures from the most widely approved layouts distract the reader. Correctness, as a result, forbids novel departures from conventional usage. The correct form of the letter in all its parts is explained and illustrated in Chapter V.

Correctness, secondly, demands strict observance of rules that control mechanical details of expression. Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and sentence structure make the reader uncomfortable because they use up energy that should be directed to the contents. For the very reason that violation of correctness usually involves elementary

mistakes, incorrectness creates a decided negative impression. Elementary errors suggest that the writer is illiterate or that he is careless, with the result that *the reader loses respect for him and may even doubt his ability to handle the more important matters in a business transaction.*

Misspelled words, which are always irritating, may lead to costly inaccuracies, as in the case of the credit man who by letter asked another credit man for a statement concerning a third person's financial standing and responsibility. The credit man could not reply because he was out of town, but a subordinate sent the following memorandum: "Note good for any amount." Later, after unfortunate experiences with the new customer, the intended meaning was discovered: "Not good for any amount."

The business man cannot, and in fact will not, take time to puzzle out the meaning of an obscure letter He will not exert the extra mental effort required to understand an incorrectly expressed message. What, for example, did the real estate man mean when he wrote to a prospect, "On this farm there is also a crick" Considerable patience and ingenuity are required to discover that he meant a brook (creek).

To command respect, the letter must be clear; to be clear, the expression must, first of all, be correct. Determine whether the following letter makes a favorable or an unfavorable impression:

Replying to your of 13th inst. inclosing samples of Bleached goods, the 26¢ goods could not use it is to open a mesh and to light weight,

On the Triangle piece at 16¢ we are purchaseing large quanteties of good as good and some better then this at 12.½¢ and if you really want to do some business you will have to make us prices so we can buy from you at same prices as we can get goods close at hand, we want to do some business with you and would like to awful well, but let us get togeather like business men, *etc.*

The finer qualities of style—especially character, concreteness, and cheerfulness—are impressive in proportion to the care with which the writer obeys the rules and conventions governing the correct use of language. He can make a favorable impression if his reader is not irritated by troublesome grammatical errors. Because the higher qualities cannot be

employed effectively unless the language is first of all correct in mechanical details, the following paragraphs deserve careful attention. They present fundamental rules established by good usage and respected by successful writers everywhere.

A. Correctness in Words.

Just as ideas are the raw material of thinking, so words are the raw material of the thought units called sentences. In oral and written expression, words are the symbols of ideas; they are tangible evidence that a man has material for thought. It is, therefore, plain self-deception to say that one knows what he wishes to say but that he cannot find words to express himself. For the purposes of communication, at least, one does not *know,* except in a vague wistful way, until he is in possession of the symbol that exactly represents his idea. It follows that a sentence is as weak, colorless, and commonplace, or, on the other hand, as strong, vivid, and original, as the ideas on which it is based. A good sentence cannot be made from a poor quality of raw materials.

Increasing your vocabulary.—Growth in power of expression requires a steadily increasing vocabulary. The fund of workable ideas can be enlarged only through the acquisition of new words. Every man has three vocabularies of varying size. The largest and least precise vocabulary he uses when he reads. The second vocabulary, used in writing, is less extensive. The third, used in speaking, is still more limited. His aim should be to gain power by transferring words from the inactive reading vocabulary to the active writing and speaking vocabularies. In place of being content with a vague impression, look up every new word in a reliable dictionary, noting its *spelling, pronunciation,* and *exact meaning.* Then use the word in writing or speaking. After you have spoken or written a word three times, it is yours forever. You have added a new idea to your equipment. This procedure, which has been found universally effective, is essential for steady progress in power of expression.

Qualities of words.—To have proper words in proper places, the careful writer observes certain well-defined standards. First, words should be adapted to the reader. Because most readers have a limited vocabulary, simple words

are safest. Secondly, to assure an accurate impression, every word must be tested for *precision.* Thirdly, as the effectiveness of the letter is weakened by the use of a single word carrying an unfortunate suggestion, every word should be tested for *force.* Lastly, to insure conformity with approved usage in present-day English, words should be tested by the *standards of good usage.*

Precise words.—The precise word conveys the writer's meaning exactly. In every case, one word, above all others in the language, is the exact symbol of the idea or fact to be impressed upon the reader. Knowing precisely what shade of meaning he wishes to convey, the writer does not rest until he has found the right word. Certainly, he cannot be satisfied with an approximate word. In a wordy sentence, weak words betray loose habits of thinking. The writer of the following sentence was not certain whether water was "decomposed" or "separated":

Water can be separated or decomposed into its elements.

It is poor policy to fill your gun with shot in the hope that one will hit the mark. In place of the old blunderbuss, which scattered the shot, use a rifle and make a clean hit.

To use proper words in proper places, the writer must know the fine shades of meaning among the members of a family of words. If he means *works* he should not dictate *plant.* Does he mean *factory, manufactory, mill, workshop, shop, forge, smithy, bloomer?* The dictator, furthermore, must be conscious of the different shades of meaning expressed by the following synonyms of *worker: laborer, toiler, artificer, artisan, craftsman, handicraftsman, wright, mechanic, mechanician, operative.* If he uses words that refer to mechanical contrivances, he should know the exact meaning of *machine, mechanism, contrivance, device, apparatus, attachment, accessory.* A good plan is to draw up lists like these, and then attack a dictionary and a book of synonyms. (See list of reliable books and dictionaries in a short bibliography at the close of the book.) The results will be useful and interesting because as the writer sharpens his understanding of the exact meaning of words that are similar yet different, he feels increased power in expression.

Suggestive words.—Plain accuracy is sufficient in a routine letter stating facts. The literal impression is, however, not sufficient if the reader needs to be persuaded. Not to speak of sales letters, there are still adjustment, service, and credit letters, the aim of which is to stimulate action. One poorly chosen word strikes a false note and spoils the tone of such a letter. In addition to precision, then, the *suggestiveness of words* demands consideration. A word can be precise and suggestive too.

The coldly correct word is not always attractive. Whenever possible, add interest to accuracy by using suggestive words. Make the letter human by an appeal to the heart as well as to the mind. This can be done by the choice of concrete, specific, figurative words. This sentence is clear:

> Tydol gasoline will increase the power of your motor on hills that slow up other cars.

The following sentences are equally clear, and vivid words add force to clearness:

> *Steep hill ahead!* A twister too! Down goes the accelerator. You liberate the greyhound speed and supple power of Tydol. The speedometer whirls.
>
> *Halfway up*—Gear shifters in front of you, gear shifters to right of you, clashing and chugging and falling behind.
>
> *Over the top*—You skim over in high with power to spare. That's Tydol power—the power that comes from the famous economical 15 to 1 mixture.

In the foregoing sentences, figurative words, in addition to making the reader understand, make him *see* and *feel.* They are impressive because they are precise in the suggestion of pleasant associations.

Good usage.—Whatever the words chosen, they must conform to good usage. To satisfy the standards of good usage, words must be in *reputable, national,* and *present* use.

Reputable words.—Reputable words are words in good standing among recognized writers and speakers. By this test there are four classes of words: (1) literary, (2) colloquial, (3) slang, and (4) vulgar. Literary and colloquial words are reputable. Literary words are appropriate in formal writing. Colloquial English frequently supplies an

informal equivalent, appropriate in conversation and friendly letters.

Formal: I informed him of the increase in sales.
Informal: I told him about the increased sales.

Informal phrases are preferable in almost any kind of business writing. The student should certainly get out of the habit of using stilted English.

Slang is not always reputable. As slang expressions are often vulgar, it is unwise to use them. The habitual use of slang indicates a cheap and flashy attitude that reflects on the character of the writer and certainly on the house he represents. The habitual use of slang, moreover, weakens a writer's ability to phrase fine shades of meaning. Slang also blurs distinctions. Take, for example, a word that was nationally used fifteen years ago: "stung." It was employed on every important and trivial occasion to indicate disappointment. To allow such a word to stand for five or six more accurate words is to weaken one's power of precise expression. In the same way, the feminine word "nice" indicates anything agreeable or pleasant from a box of sweets to a muscular full-back on a college football team. The masculine word "fine," good enough for superficial intercourse on the street, as in the vague greeting, "Fine morning," cannot be used to cover the many shades of approval that must be more accurately portrayed in a carefully planned business letter. The use of such words as "nice" and "fine" indicates a poorly stocked vocabulary.

A single slang word in a letter otherwise expressed in immaculate English is sometimes very effective; but the writer must be conscious of what he is doing and able to defend himself if criticized for using that word.

It is, furthermore, unwise to dip too far down into the very informal language of conversation. Although the letter should not be stiff, the language must not be "common," as for example:

You can get me on the 'phone any time mornings.

Write instead, with equal informality, but with less suggestion of the "low" colloquial:

You can reach me by telephone at any time during the morning.

On the other hand, avoid pretentious words calling attention to themselves instead of to the underlying meaning:

Our compensation, if that part of the bargain interests you, is the hope that in you we shall have added one more unit to the body of informed opinion upon which the solution of the mighty problems of this generation so utterly depends.

This might be attractive to a restricted class of magazine readers. In general, however, simple expressions are always safer, and more effective.

National words.—A word must be in national use, that is, understood throughout the United States. In the dictionary, words peculiar to a section of the country are marked *Provincial, Local, or Western.* Expressions commonly used only in New England, Pennsylvania, or the South should be avoided in general correspondence. In the same way, words used only by certain groups of professional men or skilled workmen should not be used unless the writer is certain that the reader belongs to the group from the lingo of which selections are being made. Such occupational words, proper enough, for example, in a letter from one civil engineer to another, or from one lawyer to a fellow practitioner, should be strictly avoided in ordinary correspondence. Foreign words are allowable only in letters dealing with dress goods, toilet articles, and other commodities with an appeal to men and women of fashionable tastes.

Modern words.—Words, finally, should be in *present* use. Avoid words marked *Obsolete, Obsolescent,* or *Archaic* in the dictionary. Such words are no longer employed in carrying on the affairs of men. They have gone out of use. The mere fact that Shakespeare used a word is no criterion of its present standing. Many expressions peculiar to his and later generations are no longer current.

A word or phrase is not in good present use if it is hackneyed. Mummified words and phrases are to be avoided like the plague. Mechanical locutions, like the following, are never used by writers who think while they compose:

Your favor of the 20th instant. . . . Your esteemed favor of the 3d ult. . . . We beg to state that in reply to yours of. . . . We beg to acknowledge yours of the. . . . Referring to yours of even date. . . . We are inclosing herewith. . . . Hoping to hear from you, we are. . . .

Time-worn expressions stifle *character*. Because they are mechanical, they show lack of *consideration* for the reader. Frequently they violate *correctness*. They are blacklisted because they can never breathe an atmosphere of *cheerfulness*, nor have they the vitality to carry conviction. The following list is not exhaustive.

Advise, as used by the average writer in his business letters, is not only hackneyed but incorrect. It is one thing to say, "Please advise me what to do," and another to say, "Advise me what *you* have done." The first use of the word is correct. The second is an incorrect substitution for "tell."

At your convenience is hackneyed and often superfluous. When the time element is important, specify it naturally and specifically.

Weak: We expect a remittance at your earliest convenience.
Natural: We expect a remittance by an early mail.
Definite: We expect a remittance within ten days.

Beg, if it suggests anything, pictures the writer on one knee before the customer. Avoid locutions such as *beg to advise, beg to state, beg to inform, beg to acknowledge.*

Contents carefully noted is not only trite but also vague.

Weak: Your letter received and contents carefully noted.
Definite: We have carefully checked all the items in your order letter of August 15.

Esteemed should be avoided even where genuine esteem is intended.

Bad: We beg to acknowledge your esteemed favor of the 12th ult.
Bad: We thank you for your esteemed favor of January 12.
Vital: We wish to tell you how much we appreciate your letter of January 12. (*The foregoing modern equivalent is always to be preferred.*)

Favor is naturally used when it indicates that a courtesy has been extended. It is, perhaps, best, however, to avoid the word entirely.

Trite: In reply to your favor of October 10 we beg to advise your order is being promptly filled.
Better: We are glad to state in answer to your letter of October 10 that your order is being filled promptly.

Herewith is tautological with *inclosed.*

Weak: We are inclosing the sample herewith.
Better: We are inclosing the sample.

In re is always out of place in any letter. Use *concerning.*

Inst., the abbreviation of *instant,* is incorrect. Always use the exact date.

Bad: We acknowledge yours of the 10th inst.
Better: Thank you for your letter of April 10.

Milady is not only hackneyed, but also hopelessly vulgar.

Per and *as per* are correctly used with Latin words: "per annum," and "per diem." However, write "5 cents the copy," or "28 cents the yard," or "$3,000 a year."

Recent date is vague and unbusiness-like. To make reference easy, use the exact date.

Bad: We acknowledge yours of recent date, in which . . .
Better: We are glad to acknowledge your letter of November 10 in which . . .

Reply suggests argument. *Response* is preferable.

We are glad to state in response to your letter of February 10 . . .

Same should never be used in place of a pronoun. Use *it, they, them,* etc.

Bad: Fill out the property form and return same to us.
Better: Please fill out the property form and return it to us.

Ult. is never used.

Bad: Yours of the 25th ult. received.
Better: We have received your letter of November 20.

Neologisms, or new words which have not established themselves, are likewise contrary to good present usage. Abbreviations like *ad* for *advertisement,* for instance, are not approved. Furthermore, the careful writer does not use nouns as verbs, or verbs as nouns unless usage allows. The following words are not approved:

He *suspicioned* that it was true.
He *glimpsed* the design in your catalogue.

A good rule to follow is Pope's:

> Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
> Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

Misused Words and Phrases.

Certain words are often incorrectly used because of confusion resulting from similarity: (1) in spelling; (2) in meaning. The following list deserves careful attention.

A, an. Although *a* is regularly used before words beginning with a consonant, and *an* before words beginning with a vowel, certain words written with an initial vowel are in reality pronounced as though beginning with a consonant, with the result that *a* and not *an* is used.

Correct: a one-man business, a union suit, a university.

Already (*by this time*). *Already* must never be written when the writer means *all ready* (*wholly ready*). Compare also, *altogether* and *all together.*

Almost, most.

Correct: Almost all the salesmen were present. (Never *most all.*)
Correct: Most of the salesmen were present.

As . . . as is less emphatic than *so . . . as* in negative statements:

Correct: This window display is not *so* attractive *as* the last one.

As, like. Use *as* when a verb follows (implied or expressed).

Correct: Write this exactly *as* I dictated it.
Correct: It looks *as though* Brown is going to visit us.
Correct: He dictates *as* I do.

When no verb follows, use *like.*

His dictation is like mine.

Between, among. Between refers to two only. *Among* refers to more than two.

But that is often wrongly used for *that.*

Correct: We do not doubt *that* you sent the message.

But what is often erroneously used for *that, but that,* and so forth.

Correct: We have no doubt *that* he will attend.
Correct: I am not sure *but that* his judgment is good.
Correct: There is no salesman *who does not make* (not: *but what* makes; not: *but who makes*) mistakes in judgment.
Correct: He included nothing *but what* (equivalent to *but that which*) was important.

Can, may. *Can* denotes ability or power. *May* denotes permission. Never dictate *can* for *may.*

Data. This word denotes more than one.

Correct: These (not: *this*) data *are* (not: *is*) reliable.

Deal. Avoid this word. It is a vulgar substitute for agreement, arrangement, transaction.

Differ from, differ with.

Correct: My sales campaign *differs from* (is *unlike*) yours in three ways.
Correct: I differ with you (*disagree with* you) as to the advisability of buying in quantities.

Different from. This is the correct form (*not: different than*). *Different* indicates that the distinction is one of kind (*from*), never one of degree (*than*).

Disinterested, uninterested. *Disinterested* means impartial. *Uninterested* means not interested.

Wrong: The customer was disinterested.
Right: The customer was uninterested.

Don't, doesn't. *Don't,* an abbreviation of *do not,* must not be used with *he* or other words in the singular number.

Incorrect: He *don't* (*do not*) respond to our letters.
Correct: He *doesn't* (*does not*) respond to our letters.

Each other, one another. These two expressions are not interchangeable. *Each other* is correct when each member stands in a definite relation to every other member.

Correct: The merchants decided to stand by *each other.*
Correct: Changes in shoe styles are rapidly following *one another* (not: *each other*).

Affect, effect. *Affect* is not a noun.

Correct: The climate affected (influenced) his health.
Correct: The new manager effected (brought about) changes in the office routine.

Fewer, less. *Fewer* refers to number. *Less* refers to amount or degree.

Correct: You shipped *fewer* lamps than we ordered.
Correct: *Less* capital is necessary for this project.

Gents. A vulgar abbreviation of *gentlemen.*

Got. *Got* is always preferred. Do not, however, use *got* with *have* or *has* to indicate mere possession.

Wrong: *Have* you got the address in question? What *has* the address got to do with it?
Right: *Have* you the address in question? What *has* the address to do with it?

Got means *secured; has got* means *has secured.*

Correct: He *has got the* order from Brown.
Correct: Miss Vernon *has got* the letter from the filing room.

Healthy, healthful. *Healthy* means state of health; *healthful* means conducive to health. Avoid *healthy* when recommending food products. Write *wholesome* or *healthful.*

Correct: *Healthful* (or *wholesome*) food makes *healthy* youngsters.

Imply, infer. *Imply* is correctly used to denote something suggested, assumed, or vaguely expressed.

Correct: Your statements *imply* that I am trying to evade payment. (The writer is the agent.)

Infer is correctly used to mean draw from, deduce from, gather from, or conclude from. (The reader is the agent.)

Correct: I *infer* from your letter that you cannot grant an extension of credit.

In, into. Use *in* to express location (the place where). Use *into* to express motion from one place to another.

Correct: Did you put that Wilson letter *into* the files?
Correct: The Wilson letter is *in* the files.

Certain established phrases retain *in* when motion is indicated: *fall in line, split in two, put in shape,* and so forth.

Its, it's. To indicate possession use *its*. *It's* is the contraction of *it is*.

Kind, sort. Always dictate:

This kind of shoe (*that* kind of silk) *is* in vogue.
Those kinds of silks *are* in vogue.

Kind of, sort of should not be followed by *a* or *an*.

Correct: What *sort of* man is he?

Do not use *kind of* or *sort of* for rather.

Correct: I *rather* (not: *sort of*) think he will be a good customer.

Lay, lie. *Lay* means to put down, place, deposit. A word must follow *lay* to complete the action. *Lie* means to recline. No additional word is necessary to complete the sense.

Present	*Past*	*Past Perfect*
I lie	I lay	I have lain
I lay	I laid	I have laid

Correct: He likes to *lie* down after lunch.
Correct: The letters are *lying* on your desk.
Correct: Yesterday the crates *lay* on the platform all morning.
Correct: He *laid* the letters on my desk.

Leave, let. *Leave* means abandon; *let* means allow.

Correct: *Let* him try it. *Let* the sale go through.
Correct: *Leave* the window display as it is. *Let* the window display stand as it is.

Liable, likely. *Liable* suggests a disadvantageous probability:

A vague statement is *liable* to be misunderstood.

Likely expresses a desirable probability:

A well-planned sales campaign is *likely* to bring results.

Milady is vulgar.

Much, many. *Much* denotes quantity; *many,* number.

Myself should not be used where *I* or *me* is meant.

Correct: The salesmanager and *I* discussed the matter.
Correct: He turned the matter over to Brown and *me*.

Use *myself* (*himself, herself, itself, themselves, yourself,* etc.) as an intensive word:

I *myself* do not approve of the plan.

Notoriety, notorious. These words are used in an unfavorable sense. They are not complimentary words. A criminal is *notorious.* Write "a *notable* executive" or "an executive *of note*" (not: "a *notorious* executive" unless he is an executive of ill repute). Write:

Much *publicity* was given to this transaction (not: "much *notoriety*" unless you mean *unpleasant publicity*).

Off of. Never use *of* or *from* with *off.*

Correct: Take those boxes *off* the shelves.
Correct: The letter must have been brushed *off* the desk.

Do not use *off* with buy.

Correct: We bought it *from* Brown and Thorne.

Party, person. Party denotes one person who is party to a legal contract. Except in legal phrases, it denotes a group of persons. *Individual* denotes a specific object or human being. *Person* is a colorless word denoting any human being or corporation.

Correct: He is the *person* (not: *party*) who placed the order.

Practicable, practical. Practicable means capable of being done (at a given time). *Practical* means valuable in actual practice (all the time). Never use *practicable* with "man." Use *practical* with persons or things. Use *practicable* with things only.

Your plan for a sales campaign may be *practical* (useful); but it is not *practicable* (capable of being put into practice) at this time.

Provided, providing. Do not use *providing* for *provided,* and do not use *that* with *provided,* when *provided* means *on condition that, if.*

Correct: Provided (not: *providing that,* or *provided that*) the directors will co-operate, I shall accept the appointment.

Salesperson is a good word to use when referring to both sexes.

Shall, will. In direct assertions, use *shall* and *will* as follows to express simply your expectation of future action (simple future): I shall, you will, he will, we shall, you will, they will.

Correct: I *shall* (not: *will*) be glad to talk the matter over with you.

Correct: The salesmen *will* be glad to welcome you.

In direct assertions, use *shall* and *will* as follows to express desire, willingness, or determination. (In this formula the speaker's volition is indicated). As used here, *shall* and *will* indicate that the action can be controlled by the writer. I will, you shall, he shall, we will, you shall, they shall.

Correct: I *will* not sign this contract in its present form.

Correct: They *shall* hold to the agreement in every detail.

Determination is suggested in both statements.

In direct questions, use *shall* in the first person to express not only simple future but also desire, willingness, determination. In the second and third persons use the form expected in the answer (whether positive or negative).

Correct: Shall I (we) return the goods?

Correct: Shall you be there at 8:20? (Answer: I shall be.)

Correct: Will he (they) come to the meeting? (Answer: He *will* [or: *will not*] come.)

Will you allow the discount? (Answer: I *will* [or: *will not*] allow it.)

In indirect discourse, use the word (or form of the word) that is proper in the direct quotation.

Correct: He wrote that he *would* accept the obligation. (He actually wrote: "I *will* accept [willingness] the obligation.")

Correct: He said that he *should* in all probability be at the meeting early. (What he actually said was: "I *shall* in all probability be at the meeting early.")

Should and *would* follow the same usage as *shall* and *will*.

Should is often used to denote confident expectation (equivalent to *ought to*):

If the ship is not delayed, the gowns *should* be on sale by Thursday noon.

Up to date, modern are not interchangeable.

Correct: A thoroughly modern store.
Correct: Bring the records up to date.

B. Correctness in Sentences.

Although judgment and free play of individuality are permitted in the choice of sentence structure and sentence length, the writer deviates at his peril from the rules governing the mechanics of style. These rules, which regulate the correct grouping of words in sentences, are well defined. The young writer should realize that every hour he invests in learning how to make his practice conform to the fundamental requirements of correctness, yields increasingly large dividends in the form of accurate, agreeable, and convincing sentences.

Unity.—Every sentence must have at least one independent subject and predicate. Do not point off part of a thought as though it were an independent unit.[1]

(*a*) *Wrong:* These are the most favorable quotations we can make you. Being based on materials of the finest quality. (Phrase.)

Right: These are the most favorable quotations we can make you. They are based on materials of the finest quality.

(*b*) *Wrong:* These are the prices we can quote you on the material you stipulate. Although lower prices are possible if you use cheaper material. (Dependent clause.)

Right: These are the prices we can quote you on the material you stipulate. However, lower prices are possible if you use cheaper material.

Right: These are the prices we can quote you on the material you stipulate, although lower prices are possible if you use cheaper material.

(*c*) *Incomplete:* Letter of 15th ult. received. In reply shall say we are . . . (Crude and illiterate.)

Complete: Your letter of July 15 *has been* received. In reply we inform you *that* we are . . .

Better: We have received *your* letter of July 15.

Good: In response to your letter of July 15 we are glad to say that we . . .

Do not run together two or more statements. Make a full stop after each unit. In place of the comma use a period.

[1] In advertisements and sales letters, and in these only, it is permissible to ignore this rule when the writer wishes to secure highly special effects.

Wrong: You promised delivery by March 15, we made our sales plans accordingly.

Right: You promised delivery by March 15. We made our sales plans accordingly.

The word joining the parts of your sentence should express the connection exactly. Use "and" when the statements it joins are equal in fact. Repeated use of "and" prevents quick perception of the exact relationships of ideas.

(*a*) *Inexact:* We shipped the goods on May 8, *and* they were in good condition.

Exact: When we shipped the goods on May 8, they were in good condition. ("Time" thought; not "and.")

(*b*) *Inexact:* The goods left our shipping department in perfect condition, *and* the carrier must be at fault.

Exact: As the goods left our shipping department in perfect condition, the carrier must be at fault. ("Reason" thought; not "and.") ("Because" is preferable to "as.")

(*c*) *Vague:* This sweeper is made for use in the home, *so* it can be used on your finest rugs.

Exact: Because this sweeper is made for use in the home, it can be used on your finest rugs.

(*d*) *Weak:* The man was very busy and his name was Brown.

Better: The man, whose name was Brown, was very busy.

Do not flatten out your thoughts in a loosely joined "and" and "but" series. Stringy statements are confusing.

Do not crowd two or more loosely related thoughts between the capital and the period.

Bad: The man lived in Arizona and his ideas on taxation were queer.

Good: The man lived in Arizona. His ideas on taxation were queer.

Confusing: The books were shipped on February 18, *and* we have the bill of lading from the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, *but* we wish to have the shipment delivered at the earliest date, *and* shall have the railroad send out a tracer immediately, *and* shall be glad to notify you as soon as we have a report. (The dictator of this thought heap had not planned his letter.)

Clear: We have a bill of lading from the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, showing that the books were shipped on February 18. As we wish the shipment delivered without delay, we shall have the railroad send out a tracer immediately. As soon as we have a report, we shall notify you promptly.

Do not separate logically related statements. Avoid the primer style. To separate closely related ideas is childish unless the advantage of emphasizing each item is obvious.

Childish: We are careful of our products. We use ingredients of the highest grade. They are bought in South America. We buy only the purest materials.

Effective: Only the purest materials procurable in South America are used as ingredients in our products.

Coherence.—Ideas are accurately grouped when there is no possibility of misunderstanding the writer's intention. Inaccuracy results from associating ideas not logically related. Do not omit words essential for accurate connection.

Misplaced ideas make inaccurate sentences. To convey your thought exactly, arrange ideas so that the sentence can be understood in your way only.

Place modifiers next to the words they modify.

Not Clear: He had a typewriter in his office which had been his grandfather's.

Clear: In his office he had a typewriter which had been his grandfather's.

Confusing: He could see the steamers plying up and down the Hudson River through his office window.

Clear: From his office window he could see the steamers plying up and down the Hudson River.

Place words like "only" and phrases like "at least" where they convey exactly what you mean.

1. (*a*) The secretary *only* signed the offer. (He merely affixed his signature.)

(*b*) Only the secretary signed the offer. (He alone, no other official, signed it.)

(*c*) The secretary signed *only* the offer. (He signed no other document.)

(*d*) The secretary signed the offer *only*. (This has the same meaning as the foregoing, but is more forceful.)

2. (*a*) *At least the office manager* should see your carbons once each week. (Supervision in addition to that of the office manager is desirable.)

(*b*) The office manager should *at least see* your carbons once a week. (He need not make corrections unless they are necessary.)

(*c*) The office manager should see *at least your carbons* once a week. (He may wish to see your dictation as well.)

(*d*) The office manager should see your carbons *once a week at least.* (It may be desirable to see them oftener.)

Guard against establishing a false connection by referring an action to the wrong agent.

(*a*) *Wrong: Referring to your inquiry, a special messenger* will deliver the necessary papers.

Right: Referring to your inquiry, *we* assure you that a special messenger will deliver the papers.

(*b*) *Wrong: When worn out, you* can have the part replaced by us without charge for service.

Right: When worn out, the part will be replaced by us without charge for service.

Right: When the part is worn out, you can have it replaced by us without charge for service.

(*c*) *Wrong:* Your revised quotations arrived just *after our salesmen had met and upset all our plans.* ("Upset" should not be associated with "met," but with "arrived.")

Right: Just after our salesmen had met, *your revised quotations arrived and upset all our plans.*

(*d*) *Dangling participle:* Entering the room, the stolen typewriter was seen standing on the table.

Clear: Entering the room, he saw the stolen typewriter on the table.

Establish an obvious connection between parallel ideas by expressing them in parallel forms. Similarity in structure calls attention to similarity in ideas.

Avoid a shift in construction. Keep the logical subject clearly before the reader throughout.

Wrong: The office boy admitted the caller, but instead of receiving a courteous greeting, the man knocked him down.

Right: The office boy admitted the caller, but the man, instead of giving him a courteous greeting, knocked him down.

Right: The office boy admitted the caller, who, instead of giving him a courteous greeting, knocked him down.

Ineffective: We have instructed our local representative in your city *that he should* make a satisfactory adjustment, and *to live up to* our policy of giving full satisfaction to the customer.

Effective: We have instructed our local representative in your city *to make* an adjustment and *to live up to* our policy of giving full satisfaction to the customer.

Effective: We have instructed our local representative in your city

that he should make an adjustment and *that he should* live up to our policy of giving full satisfaction to the customer.

Ineffective: I am in need of credit *for* installing the new line of goods and *to* replenish the established lines.

Effective: I am in need of credit *to* install the new line of goods and *to* replenish the established lines.

Ineffective: In my business *typed letters* produce no more sales than *using* mimeographed ones.

Effective: In my business *typed letters* produce no more sales than *mimeographed letters.*

Avoid partial parallelisms.

Weak: The office was small, dark, and it was poorly furnished.
Better: The office was small, dark, and poorly furnished.

Joining words, like "both . . . and," "either . . . or," "neither . . . nor," and "not only . . . but also," should connect ideas logically related.

Wrong: You must, now, send *either* your *check* before October 1, *or stand* suit for the amount.

Right: You must, now, *either send* your check before October 1, *or stand* suit for the amount.

Wrong: There must be *not only* a standard *credit time, but* we must *also hold* to this standard.

Right: There *not only must be* a standard credit time, *but* we *must also hold* to this standard.

Better: There must be *not only a standard credit time, but also strict adherence* to this standard.

Wrong: Such extensions of credit are *neither allowed* to the large customer *nor to* the small customer.

Right: Such extensions of credit are allowed *neither to* the large customer *nor to* the small customer.

Right: Such extensions of credit are allowed *neither to* the large *nor* the small customer.

Omission of essential words.—

Use "a," "an," and "the" when they are essential for accuracy. (See 66.)

One man: The secretary and treasurer attended the meeting.
Two men: The secretary and *the* treasurer attended the meeting.

An incomplete comparison is confusing.

Two meanings: He likes our goods better than our competitors. (Does he mean "than our competitors do"?)

Clear: He likes our goods better than those of our competitors.

Inconsistent: The interior fittings of this car are more sumptuous than a higher-priced car. ("Fittings" with "car"?)

Clear: The interior fittings of this car are more sumptuous than those of a higher-priced car.

A thing must be compared with any *other* thing of its own class.

Nonsense: He sold more goods last month than anybody on the sales staff. (He is a member of the sales staff. Therefore the statement means that he sold more than he himself sold.)

Accurate: He sold more goods last month than did *anybody else* on the sales staff.

Or: He sold more goods last month than did *any other* salesman on the staff.

Nonsense: I like this style better than any in your catalogue.

Accurate: I like this style better than *any other* in your catalogue.

A thing must be compared with *any* thing of a class *not* its own.

Accurate: I like *your closed car* better than *any car* in Blank's line.

The foregoing sentence is accurate because *your closed car* is compared with a car *not* in your line, but in Blank's. As the cars compared are not in the same but in different lines, the word *other* would be illogical.

Agreement.—The verb must agree with the subject in person and number. Be sure that you know the subject of the verb.

Wrong: Expense and *waste of time is* the *result* of careless transcribing.

Right: Expense and *waste of time are* the result of careless transcribing.

Right: Careless transcribing results in expense and waste of time.

Wrong: In this crate *was* found the missing *articles.* (The subject follows the verb here.)

Right: In this crate *were* found the missing *articles.*

Correct: They are the customers *who,* we agreed, *are entitled* to liberal credit.

Correct: The prize should be given to *whoever has* the highest percentage of sales. (*Whoever* is the subject of *has.*)

Together with, with, and *as well as* are not equivalent to *and.*

Wrong: The manager, as well as five salesmen, *were* at the meeting.
Correct: The manager, as well as five salesmen, *was* at the meeting.
Correct: You agreed to this, as well as I. (Such a sentence is never fully written out. If it were, it would read: "You agreed to this as well as I agreed to this.")
Correct: Brown and Ivers have no better rating than we (have).

Neither, either . . . or, neither . . . nor are not equivalent to *and.*

Wrong: Either the secretary or the treasurer *are* sure to attend.
Right: Either the secretary or the treasurer *is* sure to attend.
Correct: Neither of the officers *has* signed the contract.
Correct: Neither the floor manager nor the clerks *were* to blame. (When the members of a compound subject are both singular and plural in form the verb agrees in number with the nearest member.)

Note the difference:

He, not we, *has* agreed to take the responsibility.

Do not let the verb be drawn into relationship with intervening words.

Wrong: The *value* of automobile trucks in speeding up deliveries in large cities *have been* recognized for several years.
Right: The *value* of automobile trucks in speeding up deliveries in large cities *has been* recognized for several years.

Words like *committee, board, half,* and *number* should be consistently interpreted as singular or plural.

Inconsistent: The committee *has* disagreed in *their* findings.
Consistent: The committee *have* disagreed in *their* findings. (In this sentence *committee* is thought of as made up of individuals.)
Correct: The committee *has* made *its* decision. (*Committee* is thought of as a group.)
Correct: Half of the crates *were* damaged. (Individual crates are emphasized.)
Correct: The *number* of responses *grows* less every day. (Here bulk is emphasized.)
Correct: The company *agrees* to protect its customers on prices.

Words like *each, every, everyone, anyone,* and *anybody* are singular.

Correct: *Everybody* now knows *his* duties.

Correct: *Each* of our salesmen now recognizes *his* responsibilities.

Correct: *Every* (or *each*) salesman and saleswoman on this floor *is* expected to be courteous at all times.

Correct: *None* of the new salesmen *has* made errors in *his* report.

Correct: *None* of the new salesmen *have* made errors in *their* report.

Verbs.—The verb must accurately express the time of the action. Write precisely what you mean.

(*a*) *Inexact:* We *shall be* glad to accept your order with the understanding that the goods are to be shipped immediately. (The order is in hand. Why say "shall be" when the action takes place at the present time?)

Precise: We *are* glad to accept your order with the understanding that the goods are to be shipped immediately.

(*b*) *Inexact:* We should have been glad (last week) to *have taken* (two weeks ago?) your order. (*To have taken* wrongly indicates that the action is prior to that of *should have been glad.*)

Precise: We should have been glad (last week) *to take* (last week, at the same time) your order.

Inexact: He intended *to have signed* yesterday. (The signing was not prior to the intention.)

Precise: He intended *to sign* yesterday.

Correct: He had intended *to sign* yesterday.

Correct: Smith was reported (yesterday) *to have left* town (before the report was made).

When the verb expresses a wish, condition, or supposition clearly unreal or contrary to fact, use *were* for *was*.

Correct: If I *were* in Chicago (But: I am in New York), we could settle this difficulty in less than an hour.

I wish that I *were* in Chicago (I am in New York) to help in opening our new branch.

If I *were* you, I would not sign this agreement.

When *placing, taking, using, entering,* and so forth, are used as nouns, the word preceding must be *your* (not: you), *his* (not: him), *anyone's* (not: anyone), *its* (not: *it*), etc.

Wrong: We see no objection to *you* cancelling the order.

Right: We see no objection to *your* cancelling the order.

Correct: This can be done without *anyone's* objecting to it.

We approve of *his* sending the credit allowance.

We approve of the *company's* (not: *company*) assuming the liabilities.

Words referring to the subject or object of a verb must not be used in a form that connects them with the verb. When verbs like *look, taste, prove, keep, stand, sound,* and so forth, indicate condition or quality (not action), *is, are, was,* and *were* can be substituted.

Correct: These gowns look *beautiful.* (Not: *look beautifully,* because appearance, not action, is indicated.)

Our taster reports that the coffee tastes *good.* (not: *tastes well,* because *good* refers to the condition or quality of the coffee.)

The clerk proved *faithful.* (*Faithful* expresses the quality of the clerk.)

He performed his duties *faithfully.* (*Faithfully* refers to how he did his duties.)

The Title Company kept the mortgage *safe.* (*Safe* indicates the condition of the mortgage.)

The Title Company kept the mortgage *safely.* (*Safely* belongs with *kept* to show *how* (the manner) the mortgage was kept.)

Our adjuster stood *firm.*

Our adjuster stood *firmly* by his decision. (*Firmly* belongs with *stood.*)

Pronouns.—Study the following correct uses of pronouns with verbs.

(*a*) The salesmen are Brown and *I.*

It was *I* (or: *she, he, they*) who signed the documents.

If you were *I* (or: *he, she, they*), would you sign this paper?

He made certain of its being *she* (or: *he, we, they*).

He made certain that it was *she* (or: *he, we, they.*).—The award should be made to *whoever* has the highest percentage.

(*b*) The manager placed you and *me* (or: *her, him, us, them*) in charge.

The sales managers agree with you and *me* (*him, her, us, them*).

Whom did you see in Utica?

Whom did you vote for?

Better: For *whom* did you vote?

There should be no doubt as to the word to which a pronoun refers. A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun to avoid awkward repetition of the same word.

To determine the correct pronoun in any given sentence, think of the noun for which you intend to substitute the pro-

noun. The pronoun must agree with the noun in number (singular, plural) and in gender (masculine, feminine, neuter).

Everybody in this department is expected to make *his* report by Friday. (Use *he* when referring to both sexes. Avoid *he or she, his or hers, him or her,* except when sex distinction is important, as in legal documents like contracts.)

Every man and woman in this department is expected to do *his* part. (*His* indicates common gender.)

Both the president and the secretary have completed *their* report.

The committee on sales policy made *its* decision yesterday. (Here the group is correctly considered as an *impersonal* unit.)

He sold to every prospect with *whom* (not: *which*) he had made an appointment.

Who and *whose* refer to persons; *which* and *that,* to animals and things; *that,* to persons, animals, or things.

The matter was referred to our attorney, *who* settled it.

The live stock *that* (or *which*) you shipped from Sheridan arrived at Omaha yesterday.

Only words denoting persons having power of ownership should be used to indicate possession. Words denoting inanimate things should not be used in the possessive.

Bad: New York's mayor spoke.
The company's president was there.
Good: The Mayor of New York spoke.
The president of the company was there.

However, certain established expressions are allowed: *the law's delay, the day's work, a two weeks' holiday, three years' experience.*

Never use a pronoun to refer back to anything but an expressed noun or pronoun.

Wrong: Because of his energy he succeeded, *which* pleased the president. (*Which* cannot refer to *succeeded,* a verb.)

Right: His success, *which* pleased the president, resulted from his energy.

Confusing: He succeeded in closing a contract, *which* pleased the officers. (*Which* cannot refer to a verb. *Contract* is not meant here.)

Clear: His success in closing a contract pleased the officers.
He succeeded in closing a contract that pleased the officers. (Here the meaning is different because *that* now refers to *contract.*)

Confusing: After he had agreed to take the shipment, he failed to live up to *it.*

Clear: After he had agreed to take the shipment, he failed to live up to his *agreement.*

Not clear: The contract was satisfactory in every detail to the men who signed it. *This* was reflected in their attitude. (There is no expressed word for *this* to refer back to.)

Clear: The contract was satisfactory in every detail to the men who signed it. *This satisfaction* was reflected in their attitude.

The word to which the pronoun refers must be unmistakable.

Not clear: Jones made the sale to Brown just before *he* left. (Who left?)

Clear: Just before *he* left, *Jones* made the sale to Brown.

Clear: Just before *Brown* left, Jones sold *him* the goods.

C. Punctuation.

Punctuation marks indicate the proper degree of separation between words and groups of words which need to be kept apart for clearness. Far from being an ornament or frill, punctuation is an essential part of letter sentences. It cannot be neglected or used according to the whim of the writer, for the meaning of a sentence often changes with the presence or absence of a comma. Observance of the following rules, which represent the irreducible minimum in modern business usage, will assure accuracy and instant clearness. Punctuation has *not* gone out of style, as is frequently contended by illiterate people who are not sure of their ground.

The comma (,) indicates the weakest break in thought. Stronger separation is indicated by the semicolon (;). The strongest degree of break within the sentence is marked by the colon (:). The dash (—), which should be sparingly used, indicates an abrupt change in ideas. Marks of parentheses ( ) suggest looser connection than can be indicated by commas. When an editor adds something to a sentence written by another person, or when the writer wishes to indicate material independent of the rest of the sentence, he uses brackets [ ]. Quotation marks (" ") indicate that the inclosed words are exactly reproduced from the writing of some other person.

Single quotes (' ') are used to indicate a quotation within a quotation.

A dependent group of words introducing a sentence is pointed off by a comma. All groups introduced by words like the following are dependent: *because, as, if, although, when, after, as soon as.*

Among industries making finished products, the automobile industry ranks first in value of output.

If you haven't yours, send for it today.

When buying began to accelerate, prices rose abruptly. (This sentence would not be instantly clear without the comma.)

With butter fat bringing farmers around 52 cents a pound, livestock prices pretty well up, and the grain market looking better, we are going to have more business from farmers next year.

Confusing: Although the factories immediately speeded up the output of finished products did not satisfy the demand.

Clear: Although the factories immediately speeded up, the output of finished products did not satisfy the demand.

Point off a dependent word or group of words that breaks the continuity of the direct assertion.

It is remarkable, *considering the amount of money spent,* how few advertisers exercise sound judgment.

The engineer, *his college course completed,* studies technical magazines.

The courts were divided, *apparently hopelessly,* on the question of whether a labor union, *as such,* could own a trade-mark and be protected in its use.

Transitional words and phrases are pointed off.

The plan, however, is incomplete.

The company, on the other hand, could get an injunction.

Here, again, use was the main argument.

Words or groups of words used in a series (minimum of three units) are separated by commas. A comma should be used before *and* introducing the last member of the series, unless the last two units are to be read as a pair.

Machinery, materials, equipment, and supplies are bought by the "conference" method. (Nouns)

You will like the exclusive patterns, the latest checks, the stylish stripes, and the attractive colors. (Phrases)

He must have imagination, be resourceful, be able to devise selling plans, and have genuine enthusiasm.

The sleeves are the right length, the yoke falls naturally into the lines of the shoulder, and the collar has the neatness that pleases you. (Clauses)

Words used in direct address or in explanation of another word are set off by commas.

We regret, Mr. Brown, that this delay has inconvenienced you.

S. S. McClure, editor of *McClure's Magazine,* will speak.

He has been appointed advertising manager of Brown and Vail, manufacturers of Blank shoes.

He waited at the convention headquarters, the Hotel Wisconsin.

Explanatory modifiers introduced by *who, which,* and *that,* or words derived from them, are set off by commas. Limiting (restrictive) modifiers introduced by *who, which,* and *that* are not pointed off. Failure to observe these rules causes inaccurate statements.

Limiting: Sailors who are superstitious will not sail on Friday. (Not all sailors are superstitious.)

Explanatory: Sailors, who are superstitious, *will not sail on Friday.* (The writer believes that all sailors are superstitious enough not to sail on Friday.)

Use the following test to determine whether a modifier limits or explains. If the meaning of the direct assertion remains unchanged when the modifier is left off, the modifier explains. If the meaning of the direct assertion is incomplete without the modifier, the modifier limits. The following sentence would not convey the writer's meaning without the modifier, because the thought is limited to those business women who are interested in their physical welfare.

Limiting: Business women who are interested in their physical welfare come here twice each week.

Limiting: I wish to buy a mortgage bond that nets 5 per cent and is safe.

Limiting: To the man who has these qualifications we will pay $5,000 a year.

Explanatory: Our salesmen, all of whom have been with the firm at least five years, *keep in close touch with our customers.*

Limiting: The salesmen who have been with our firm at least five years will be guests of honor.

Use a comma between two or more independent groups connected by one of the simple connectives like *and, but, or,* and *for.*

Correct: Brown is entitled to the bonus, *for* his sales record is excellent.

Confusing: Do not cease working *for* the reward of intelligent effort is advancement.

Clear: Do not cease working, for the reward of intelligent effort is advancement.

No comma is necessary between short independent groups which do not themselves contain commas.

Correct: You are entitled to the bonus and you shall have it.

If special emphasis is desired for each group, insert a comma.

Correct: You are entitled to the bonus, and you shall have it.

The semicolon is used less often than the comma. It usually separates independent groups that are long and complicated.

Use a semicolon between independent groups containing commas.

He wants to be a salesman; but, as a matter of fact, he does not know the bitter disappointments, the hardships, and the nerve-killing experiences a salesman must face.

If left to themselves, young salesmen would, of course, learn these things from experience; but, likely as not, they would learn them all wrong.

Use a semicolon between two independent groups when the second clause has a new subject and is introduced by *but.*

Closed punctuation has been used for many years; but open punctuation is gaining in favor.

Use a semicolon between series units when each unit is to receive special emphasis.

Architects visualize great buildings; they plan them; and they specify appropriate materials.

Correct but less emphatic: Architects visualize great buildings, plan them, and specify appropriate materials.

Use a colon between two independent groups when they are not connected by a joining word, and when the first group points to the second and is completed by it.

There is one reason for our success: merit based on performance.

There is no need now to lecture these men on company policies: they have learned these things for themselves.

Use a colon when a general statement is followed by a specific restatement. The colon is used even when words like *namely* and *as follows* are not expressed.

Turn a musician into a hodcarrier, and the world will lose twice: the building industry through an indifferent workman; humanity through the loss of that workman's unborn music.

A manufacturing establishment ordinarily has four departments: the executive, the administrative, the productive, the sales.

Words introducing a long quotation are followed by a colon. When the introduction is formal, use a colon even if the quotation is short.

Formal: This is what he said: "The estimates must be ready tomorrow."

Informal: He said, "Your estimate must be ready tomorrow."

The dash and marks of parenthesis should be used only for highly special effects, and never as mere substitutes for the comma, semicolon, or colon.

Marks of parenthesis indicate additional material (usually explanatory) that is loosely connected with the rest of the sentence.

The Standard Oil Company (N. J.) sent this report to its stockholders.

It was in 1912 (February 3) that the first Timken advertisement appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post.*

Registration of a trade-mark is *prima facie* evidence of ownership (if obtained under the Act of 1905).

The dash may be used before an important word or group of words to shock the reader into attention. Its use had better be limited to sales letters and sales copy.

The *Johnstown News* is growing—surely, conservatively—on its own merits. It is easy for a newspaper to gain in circulation—if the

methods adopted in getting the increase are not to be questioned. The *Johnstown News* is gaining circulation daily—on the right basis. (Note that the dash in this passage becomes ineffective because the reader soon tires of repeated shocks.)

Quotation marks are used before and after every direct quotation. Use single quotation marks for a quotation placed within another quotation.

She asked me, "What does 'open' punctuation mean?"

When two marks of punctuation are used together, observe the following rules:

1. The period and comma are always inside quotation marks.
2. The question mark is inside quotation marks when it refers to less than the whole sentence.
3. When it refers to the whole sentence of which the quotation is a part, the question mark is outside the quotes.

Did he say "Wire at once"? (No period is used after "once.")

4. If it does not belong to the quoted words only, the semicolon or colon is outside the quotation marks.

He said "Wire me"; so we sent a "wire."

5. When marks of parenthesis inclose less than the unit marked off by a comma, semicolon, colon, or end punctuation, the marks of parenthesis are inside.

After our first advertisement appeared in 1912 (February 3), we had to increase output. (The parenthetical words belong to the material set off by the comma.)

D. Capitalization.

Capitalize the first word of every sentence, direct quotation, and line of poetry. Capitalize the word which follows "Resolved" or "Whereas" in formal resolutions. Capitalize the names of months and days, but not of seasons. Capitalize the names of countries and words derived from them (namely, Brazil, Brazilian).

The following distinction is fundamental. Capitalize the word that specifically identifies (proper noun) an individual

person or thing. Do not capitalize the general word (common noun) that refers to a class of persons or things. Distinguish between words that name the individual and words that name the general class.

Capitalize names of (1) rivers, lakes, oceans; (2) mountains, parks; (3) streets, localities; (4) railroad stations, platforms, trains, cars; (5) hotels, rooms; (6) churches, libraries; and (7) similar things that have clearly defined individuality:

1. the Hudson River, on the River John, Lake Huron, Long Lake, Atlantic Ocean.
2. Mount Rainier, Whiteface Mountain, Glacier National Park, Central Park.
3. Fifth Avenue, John Street, the East Side, Fifty-seventh Street.
4. Enter the Grand Central Station, walk to Platform 7, and ask a red-cap to guide you to Car 225 on the Twentieth Century Limited.
5. From the Wistaria Room at the Hotel Astor, enter Room 79 and ask for the mail in Box 16.
6. the First Methodist Church (But: the first Methodist church to be organized in this city). Use the Reading Room in the Carnegie Library (But: Every library should have an airy reading room.)

Do not capitalize names of common branches of knowledge unless they are used as specific names.

He specialized in economics and advertising. At college he took lectures in Economics 23 and Advertising 19.

Capitalize a title or name when it is used so as to be understood to refer specifically to a person or thing.

He may be seen daily on the Avenue (Fifth Avenue).

The President (of the United States) favors the World Court.

The Emperor lives in exile. (But: A king is not popular nowadays.)

Call the Doctor. (But: Call a doctor.)

Capitalize names of (1) institutions, foundations; (2) firms, corporations; (3) organizations, clubs, associations, departments; (4) newspapers, magazines, bulletins; (5) books, articles, or their subdivisions.

1. the A. Barton Hepburn Foundation, at Columbia University, at the University of Wisconsin, the Columbia University School of Business, the Burns High School. (But: He attended high school.)
2. Arnold, Constable & Co., The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea

Company, The American Radiator Company, the National City Bank of New York.

3. the Republican Party (But: the republican form of government), the Rotary Club, the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education, the Harvard Union, the Sales Department, the Department of Research, the Tenth Regiment (But: the tenth regiment to leave).

4. in the *New York Evening Post,* in *The Saturday Evening Post, The Outlook,* in the *Bankers' Magazine,* the *Bulletin of the National Association of Credit Men,* in the *Proceedings of the Better Letter Conference.*

5. "The Art of Collecting," "Obvious Adams," "More Power to You," "American Problems from the Point of View of a Psychologist," Chapter III (But: the third chapter), Part II (But: the second part), see the Index (But: every book should have an index).

Capitalize points of the compass when they are specific words, designating divisions of a country. Do not capitalize them when they indicate direction. These rules apply to derivatives of these words.

Cotton is grown in the South. The Southern States are prosperous. He walked south from here. The North Atlantic States form a geographical division. The northern Atlantic states are industrial. He was born in the West (Middle West). The center of population is moving west (westward, is westbound). An east wind was blowing. This is Central Park West. Send it to 420 East Forty-second Street.

Do not capitalize a general word (one that indicates a class of objects). This applies to words that were once individual but that have lost their specific force:

marathon race, maxim guns, china dishes (but: Chinese fans), a boycott, fuchsia, pasteurize.

Whatever the system of capitalization used by the writer, it should be followed consistently.

E. Abbreviations.

Abbreviations should be sparingly used. Never sacrifice courtesy to haste. Avoid abbreviations like *acc't* and *am't* in the body of the letter. Do not abbreviate the name of the month, and never use the form *2/16/24* except for office memoranda. Never write *D'r S'r, Gents,* or *Y'rs sinc'ly.* Never use & for *and,* and *Co.* for *Company,* the only excep-

tion being a firm name officially written with one or both of the foregoing abbreviated forms.

Abbreviations in the salutation and the complimentary close are vulgar. In the body of the letter, abbreviated words spoil the tone and lead, furthermore, to frequent misunderstanding. Their use should be limited to routine correspondence directed to a limited group of persons who are familiar with the abbreviations. Under such circumstances they are approved timesavers, but the writer must be guided by a well-defined list of timesaving abbreviations based on such a list as may be found in the appendix of an unabridged dictionary or in the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual.* This *Style Manual* gives the approved abbreviations of States and Territories, and is a valuable reference book for any business man or woman.

When a title is used after a person's name in the inside address, it is often abbreviated. Titles appearing before the name are not abbreviated: Manager James Brown; Mr. James Brown, Manager (or Mgr.); President Nicholas Murray Butler (or Mr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President (Not: Pres.).

Do not use a title before the name, as above, and also an honorary title or degree after the name.

Wrong: Professor Frank A. Patterson, Ph. D.
Right: Mr. Frank A. Patterson, Ph. D.
Right: Professor Frank A. Patterson.

Do not use both Mr. and Esq.

Correct: Mr. John H. Lane.
Correct: John H. Lane, Esq.

F. Use of Numbers.

Spell out numbers that can be expressed in one or two words: Twenty-sixth Street (But: 146 Street), one hundred dollars, two thousand crates. This rule, which is fundamental, is modified by the following rules:

Where the number is part of a name identifying a room, place, or other thing, do not spell out the number unless it is officially written out in the name: Platform 7, Platform

Seven, Locker 74, Locker Seventy-four. This rule applies to telephone numbers, house numbers, and the like.

Spell out the hour of the day (twenty minutes past three, at three-thirty); the years and months of a person's age (sixty years and eight months); amounts in cents (ninety-six cents); and round numbers (at least six hundred and forty answers).

Do not spell out the day of the month or the year, except in rigidly formal writing. Do not spell out numbers involving both dollars and cents.

When numbers occur repeatedly, follow one plan consistently, as follows:

The meeting was attended by seventy salesmen, forty-five credit men, and one hundred and twenty-two advertising men.

There were 365 responses to the first letter, 278 to the second, and 200 to the third.

Never use *d, nd, rd, st,* or *th* after the number of the day or after the number of the street. When the month is not mentioned, the foregoing abbreviations are used.

Correct: December 28, 1924. 510 West 144 Street.
Correct: Your letter of the 15th did not mention this plan.
Incorrect: We received your letter of June 15th.
Correct: We received your letter of June 15.

G. Spelling and Hyphenation.

Misspelled words are the skin eruptions of weak writing. They are disagreeable because they are on the surface, and, therefore, visible to everyone. A reader who knows little or nothing of rhetorical principles can nevertheless detect, and usually does detect, misspellings, with the result that the writer's firm suffers in his opinion. Yet the majority of writers can improve their spelling almost to perfection. As a rule, good spellers are not born but made.

Although there is no infallible remedy, the will to spell correctly is the first essential to progress. The second is to concentrate on troublesome routine words. No general list of frequently misspelled words is as useful as an individual list based on personal experience. It has been estimated that the average individual's difficulties in spelling involve from

twenty to fifty words. Put these trouble makers on the black-list—your individual blacklist.

The third essential is to study these words regularly for brief periods. Make sure that you see each letter in the troublesome word. Defective or careless vision is the real cause of much bad spelling. It is also necessary to pronounce words correctly. Slovenly pronunciation and careless hearing are often the cause of inaccurate reproduction. If one says *reconize*, he will probably misspell *recognize*. If he adds a syllable to *athletics*, he will no doubt write *atheletics*, as many careless spellers do. Send to the brain a message accurate in all details. Only then have you the right to expect an accurate reproduction.

These suggestions are not theoretical. They produce results where rules have failed. Mere memory work, therefore, however useful as a help, is not the exclusive prop of the poor speller. He can avoid unintelligent drudgery if he conscientiously applies to his own difficulties the three foregoing suggestions. Although there is no royal road to perfection in spelling, there is a road leading to success, and the three steps outlined in the last paragraph are three finger posts that point the way.

The correct spelling of the more common *ei* and *ie* words can be remembered by reference to the word *Celia: e* after *c* as in *receive;* and *i* after *l* as in *believe*.

For quick reference, every writer should have a reliable dictionary at his elbow. Whenever a word is looked up, add it at once to your individual list.

In addition to studying carefully the list of commonly misused words (See p. 66), look up the correct pronunciation and exact meaning of the following words:

Accept, except (both verbs)	Later, latter, latest, last
Beside, besides	Lose, loose (both verbs)
Consul, counsel	Principal, principle
Continual, continuous	Respectfully, respectively
Farther, further	Therefore, therefor
Intelligent, intelligible	Viz., e. g., i. e.

Consult the dictionary for correct syllabication of words (dividing a word, as at the end of a line). It is unpleasant to read a letter containing divided words at the right margin.

An expert transcriber avoids divided words and yet types an approximately straight right margin by spacing the words in the line.

Hyphenated words trouble even experienced writers, because there is no agreement among authorities as to how words should be divided. However, certain tests are sometimes helpful. The speed of pronunciation, for instance, often determines whether a word is hyphenated. At one extreme there is *green house,* pronounced slowly. At the other extreme is *greenhouse,* pronounced rapidly. Words falling between those two extremes are usually hyphenated, like "post-office."

In the following expressions the hyphenated words have lost their identity as individual units: *medium-weight* paper, a *well-managed* office; a *two-year* contract. They are drawn together to form a compound modifier of the word that follows. On the other hand, when such words follow the word they modify, they do not lose their identity, but remain individual units.

This office is *well managed.* (Do not hyphenate words clearly retaining their identity as separate units: a *blue silk* dress. Here *blue* modifies *silk dress.*)

Observe the following correct usage with regard to numbers: *thirty-eight, ninety-sixth.*

Hyphenate fractions when they are used to modify a word:

He has a *one-third* interest in the business (but: He owns *one third* of the business).

Retain the hyphen when there is an awkward juxtaposition of letters, as in *anti-imperialistic.* The only safe practice is to consult the dictionary.

Oral and Written Exercises in Compactness and Correctness.

1. Rewrite the following sentences, observing the correct use of the apostrophe to indicate omission or the possessive case:

1. Every business man knows it's meaning.
2. He worked up to a managers position.
3. I attended the Girl's Secretarial School.
4. I have had two year's experience.

5. My three months experience helped me.
6. Sixty-three years experience has taught us this.
7. I completed a seven months business course.
8. With this weeks order send a dozen cases of peaches.
9. Wont you, therefore, return the goods?
10. In it's ten years of fair dealing, the firm has prospered.
11. We can give you a six months guaranty.
12. We sold these goods on thirty days credit.
13. We have had ten years experience.
14. I have had three years experience selling brake lining.
15. We always insist upon each customer settling his account on time.

2. Write the following sentences, correctly capitalizing, and justifying each capital you use:

1. Our Cedar Chests are made from genuine southern pine.
2. I saw your advertisement in the saturday evening post.
3. I saw your goods advertised in the new york times.
4. The popularity of this number 5 electric iron proves its worth.
5. He sells China ware.
6. These China silks are imported.
7. He entered the grand concourse at the grand central station, walked to gate seven, and entered platform seven. He walked along this platform until he came to car 225 of the twentieth century limited. The porter took him to compartment 37. Next morning when he awoke he found himself looking out upon the grain fields of the middle west.
8. Please forward my letters to box 36, hotel cadillac, detroit, michigan.
9. Last year he studied economics, English, banking, and history.
10. He took botany 5, economics 11, and english 6 in his sophomore year.
11. The class in business english meets in room 712.
12. The fourth chapter is interesting. You will find chapter V useful in your business.
13. He liked part IV of the book.
14. The third section of the train will leave in ten minutes.
15. He announced that section three will leave in ten minutes.

3. Write the following sentences, omitting or inserting commas according to whether you decide that the relative clause is limiting or explanatory. In each case, justify your choice.

1. Inclosed is our circular which gives full information as to the keyboard number of various models and the price of each model.

2. We are sending you one of our cook books which we know you will find helpful.

3. The maximum length of term of the trade acceptance is ninety days on all except agricultural paper which is allowed to run six months. Commercial paper allowed to run longer is not safe.

4. A woman who really knows something about clothes seldom buys a hat or a gown without consulting her husband; but a man who usually knows very little about fabrics or style seldom consults any opinion but his own.

5. You have made a trade mistake in correcting which you will have considerable trouble.

6. Our nearest competitor who had been advertising extensively for three years suddenly stopped his advertising.

7. In my grandfather's day that company's advertising appropriation was three thousand dollars which was the largest amount spent up to that time for local advertising.

8. The commercial artist who won the prize has had only two years' experience.

9. The inspectors found a number of defective hides which they did not accept.

10. The language that was used in business letters in 1875 sounds very old-fashioned today.

4. Punctuate the following sentences correctly. Justify each mark of punctuation you use.

1. As you probably know the old type of hot water bottle is being rapidly replaced by the new chemical hot bottle.

2. Brown is entitled to the bonus for his sales record is excellent. In total of sales he has made an unusual record.

3. Do not cease working for the reward of intelligent effort is advancement.

4. When buying began suddenly to accelerate prices rose.

5. Although the factories speeded up the output of finished products did not satisfy the demand.

6. Our customers always receive courteous consideration satisfaction and prompt service.

7. The new policy is advantageous to our customers for it is so designed that their needs are intelligently considered.

8. On the other side for about two thirds of the distance the salesroom is divided into two sections one for the haberdashery and one for the suits and overcoats.

9. I strongly urge you therefore to keep the shipment.

10. If business men did not generously supply illustrative material writers on business subjects could not make their essays practical.

5. The italicized words are incorrectly used. In each case state why the word is incorrectly used. Rewrite each sentence, substituting the correct word or phrase.

1. We suggest that if you desire business references *that* you write to the Citizens State Bank in Mason City.
2. I feel that after a few years with your company *that* I could master the technique of which you speak.
3. There is no question *but that* you will realize the profit.
4. I hope you will be able to use me *and* that if you can't you will keep me in mind.
5. Do you realize that while you are hesitating this way and ignoring our requests for payment *that* you are impairing your credit standing.
6. These clothes find instant favor with men *that* thrill upon the completion of a forward pass.
7. If you wish to return the dresses, you *can* do so at our expense.
8. We are glad that you chose us as your *manufactures*.
9. Please feel assured that we have no apprehensions as to the *outcome* of this account. (ultimate payment?)
10. The increased interest means a *raise* in prices.
11. The quality of this *camebrick* is unsurpassed.
12. You need a young *lady* as secretary.
13. In typed letters I am less *apt* to misspell.
14. These are letters the writer is *apt* to be called upon to write.
15. The goods were not sent, *due to* a mistake in the shipping department.
16. We try to treat our customers just *like* we want to be treated.
17. Another week has passed *and* your repair man has not appeared.
18. *Since* I completed my course only last year, I have had little experience.
19. The catalogs arrived this morning *and* the workmanship is not up to standard.
20. We have thoroughly examined the pumps *and* can find no defects.
21. You can whisper *in* the Silentphone.
22. May we hope to hear from you soon with *regards* to your reservations?
23. Send half of the order on March 1 and the *balance* on March 10.
24. Ours is different *than* any other candy.
25. Do not go *further*. Stop here.
26. We have a *seperate* department for women.
27. *Boy's* shoes for sale here.

28. Watch our *weakly* specials.
29. Let us do your cleaning and *dying.*
30. We can give you *carload* (car load, car-load?) shipments.

6. Write the following sentences, filling in *shall* or *will,* and justifying your choice in each instance:

1. Because I . . . move to Chicago I must find another position.
2. I . . . gladly send you a case of my preserves on approval.
3. Our dealer in your city . . . be glad to fill your order.
4. Return the goods. We . . . gladly exchange them.
5. We . . . leave the adjustment in your hands.
6. . . . you stop at Buffalo on the way west?
7. . . . the copy writers begin on this problem?
8. I . . . never permit that.
9. If he misses another call, we . . . lose an old customer.
10. Our salesman . . . probably not be cordially received, but he . . . make the attempt, whatever happens.

7. Each of the following sentences contains the wrong form of a verb. Substitute the correct verb. Why is your form correct?

1. It was only after 110,000,000 Timken tapered roller bearings had been made, sold, and thoroughly proved their right to pre-eminence in their field that they were adopted as worthy to be built into a product bearing the Dodge trade-mark.
2. You cannot make a mistake if one of these patterns are chosen.
3. This bottle will not lay in your showcase and accumulate dust.
4. The goods specified in your order was billed at our usual terms.
5. The leather in the shoes we sent you was heavier than that of the sample our salesman showed you.
6. The silk in the gown you have was of a higher grade.
7. Thank you for your order of twenty cases of June peas which was shipped yesterday.
8. Your fair treatment of us in the past, and the high credit rating you have maintained, has convinced us of your willingness to refute this gossip.
9. The new and different character of this product appeal to men of taste.
10. If you desire to have your letterheads bound, we will be glad to have you ship them back.
11. If either of these assumptions are correct, kindly notify us.
12. Fairness to all our customers compel us to adopt a standard credit policy.

13. The household appliances at the disposal of the housewife has changed drudgery to pleasant activity.
14. You state that prices on your last order were too high.
15. You state that $115.00 was a high price for these suits.
16. Suppose a beautiful maroon-colored inclosed car was standing in your driveway.
17. Unless our customers pay their bills on time we would be unable to continue business.

8. For each weak verb or verb phrase, substitute a more forceful verb.

1. You may be able to use these attractive novelties as counter displays.
2. The inclosed folder will give you complete details.
3. The low price on this fresh stock will insure larger sales.
4. It would be to your advantage to buy in small shipments.
5. I hope that my apology will be accepted.
6. We hope that this explanation will prove satisfactory.
7. Our large-scale production will save you money.
8. This will acknowledge your letter of November 1, inclosing my order, corrections on which have carefully noted.
9. See how easily these borders may be cleaned.

9. Rewrite the following sentences. Find modern equivalents for the stereotyped words and phrases.

1. I trust you will adjust the aforementioned matters.
2. These are quality goods and you will dispose of same quickly.
3. Yours of the 9th just received.
4. We are replacing the broken dish and rushing same to you by air mail.
5. In response to yours of the 5th inst. we wish to advise that a medium grade of cotton was used in making up your order.
6. We acknowledge your order and assure you same will have our immediate attention.
7. I need your repair man in the worst way.
8. I take the liberty of asking that you grant me an interview.
9. We are pleased to advise that our prices are as low as any candy jobber's.
10. We acknowledge receipt of your letter of July 21, with reference to your account in amount of $750.
11. Yours of the 8th inst. received and contents noted.
12. The goods were shipped as per your order of May 10.
13. I wish to advise you that the shipment left our factory in good condition.

14. If the number of reservations would warrant same, we shall be glad to operate through sleeping cars for your party.

15. I trust that our terms may meet with your approval and that you will favor us with your valuable order.

10. Rewrite each of the following groups, breaking up the thought heaps into unified sentences:

1. Just show the card to your father and have him sign it, then send it back to us.

2. We call your attention to your past-due account, no doubt you have overlooked it in the rush of business.

3. We were sorry to learn from your letter of March 20 that you failed to receive the February and March, 1925, issues of the *National Geographic Magazine* and since it is apparent that the former which was forwarded in the regular course of mailing bearing your correct name and address, miscarried en route, we have been very glad to supply a duplicate.

4. We realize, however, the embarrassing position in which this places you and although we are not to blame for the breakage we are shipping you a duplicate of the mirror broken in transit and we shall take up the matter with the express company.

5. I waited patiently for a week, then in despair I sent you a night letter, but it has not been answered.

6. You may feel at first that these requirements are arbitrary, but we feel sure that on second thought you will realize that they are only in conformity with proper business procedure, not reflecting on the responsibility of any particular individual, but only following a general credit policy that has been long established.

7. The inclosed booklet will give you an idea of our kennels, and we should be very pleased to have you motor out next Saturday and bring your son, as that is children's day with us and all the kiddies have a chance to play with their prospective playmate.

8. You may prefer to withdraw your order, if so you will not offend us.

9. We feel sure that it is merely an oversight that you have neglected this matter, as heretofore when you were dissatisfied with any article bought from us, you immediately returned it, which is exactly what we desire our customers to feel they have the privilege to do.

10. All you have to do is to attach $3 to the card we shall send you each week, mail it, and before you realize it the washer is paid for.

11. Our business necessitates many small accounts, much trouble is saved if each one is paid promptly.

12. Read the folder then mail the order.

13. There may be cheaper machines built, you don't want them.

Our machines are built to last a lifetime, a novice can operate them. You deal with us directly, we have no dealers.

14. We consider you one of our valued customers and we certainly do not want to lose your patronage but, on the other hand, you must realize that unless our customers pay their bills on time, we should be unable to continue business, especially inasmuch as charge accounts are concerned, as we have one thousand customers who are buying on the credit plan.

15. We do a wholesale business only, therefore we cannot supply the windshield cleaner, but we have four representatives in Buffalo, any one of whom will be glad to demonstrate the operation of our cleaner, so we urge you to get in touch with one of the following stores.

11. Convert each of the following incomplete statements into a unified sentence:

1. Answering your inquiry, reference houses selling for $8000 or less.
2. Answering your letter of recent date, in which you ask for our best price on Utility Brand linens.
3. Believe I can obtain better results doing purchasing work and that department at Lowe's is limited.
4. This being the ideal time of year to enjoy a motor car.
5. Regret delay, but did best we could under circumstances.
6. Thanking you for your letter of July 7 which gives us an opportunity to explain our policy.
7. So that in the future your orders will be filled according to these specifications.
8. The quality is unsurpassed. While the price is low.
9. He made ten calls. Receiving six orders.
10. The new man sold eight brushes yesterday. Also a sweeper.

12. Point out illogical connections in the following sentences. Explain briefly what the fault is in each case. Rewrite the sentence.

1. We carefully packed this set before leaving the factory.
2. When buying from a mail order house, merchandise is chosen from the catalogue by the customer.
3. Thank you for the information concerning the financial condition of your business which you gave us in your letter of February 12.
4. This tea is accurately measured and packed by special machines in handy gauze bags.
5. In applying for this position the inclosed statement is submitted to you.

6. In making a study of business English, two things must be considered by me.

7. You will realize that this is our wholesale price and cannot be filled more than once.

8. We also furnish you with an illustrated instruction book of recipes, simple to make and delicious to eat.

9. Before buying, we know you will want to see the articles.

10. The office boy admitted the caller, but instead of receiving a courteous greeting, the man knocked him down.

11. As a customer of long standing we have always found you prompt in your payments.

12. By sending back the damaged hides, at our expense, we shall replace them. We suggest that the railroad company be consulted before going further in this matter.

13. We are glad you are interested in this book and will be pleased to send you a copy.

14. It is our established policy to grant an exclusive agency for the sale of our products to one store in a town.

15. I guarantee to save you money and will cheerfully refund if not satisfied.

16. By purchasing pencils in job lots we do not believe you will be satisfied.

17. To obtain the largest profits we can best serve you by frequent but small shipments of candy.

18. We hope this information will be entirely satisfactory and will appreciate your order.

19. We trust in the future that you will take advantage of the discount.

20. While planning your vacation in Atlantic City, we wish to call your attention to the Hotel Morton.

21. We only sell to the wholesale trade.

22. In these books you find a new world at night by the fireside in an easy chair.

23. We only want you to be satisfied.

24. Thus credit allows the buyer to pay for the goods he is receiving now at some future time.

25. In doing this the service element is stressed by the credit man.

26. Please quote your lowest price on your best creamery butter in cases packed in pound boxes.

27. I decided to enroll in the course you are giving for a number of reasons.

28. Permit me to send you without obligation the October issue of the Industrial Arts Magazine by signing the inclosed stamped post card.

29. Let the Xtra Hatcher start you on a successful poultry year by sending in your order at once.

30. The dealer's profit is eliminated by shipping direct to you.

31. I hope that you will unhesitatingly agree and await your reply.

13. Rewrite the following sentences, correcting the faulty use of pronouns. Justify your revision.

1. He had a typewriter in his office which had been his grandfather's.

2. It is a thrifty business man who takes advantage of these discounts and pays their bills promptly.

3. Everyone who buys a hot water bag complains because they last only a short time.

4. The demand created for our products by our advertising is enormous, so that you can dispose of it promptly at a good profit.

5. Mr. Brennan was made manager, which necessitated a change in my work.

6. Each letter contained four paragraphs and averaged 153 words, which allows about 38 words to each paragraph.

7. A copy will be gladly mailed to anyone who makes a request on their business stationery.

8. Further delay will impair your credit, which neither of us wants.

9. Our large production and the direct-to-the-consumer sales have done away with a good deal of expense. This we gladly transmit to you.

10. The school board has appointed me for the coming year, but they are willing to release me if I can better myself.

11. Yours friends returned from California last summer with snapshots of all the unique things they saw and did. There were the Indians who posed as the train stopped; here they were on horseback in Yellowstone; here they had taken beautiful scenes of the Grand Canyon.

12. Inclosed are cuts showing "closed car comforts at open car cost" which gives you the detailed specifications.

13. Anyone of our dealers in your city will demonstrate the washer gladly if you call at their store.

14. If we made any exceptions it would be unfair to other dealers.

15. An exclusive agency sells our tires. They have the right to all sales in the territory.

16. We carry all sizes mentioned in the folder, which enables us to give you prompt and economical service.

17. One man "just reads" a book, but another reads the same and gets something out of it.

18. The moth is a tiny animal, but unless you have one of our cedar chests you must fight them.

19. The inclosed folder, illustrated in color, shows you and tells you all about Silentphone. It shows you how it looks on the telephone instrument and how it works. Be sure to read it carefully.

20. The annual report of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company gives an example of money wisely invested in a new invention that brought unbelievable results. One hundred dollars invested in original Bell stock is worth $45,000 today.

14. Rewrite the following sentences, each of which contains a false statement of comparison.

1. The material used is much better than his last suit.
2. Our volume of business compared favorably with the previous periods.
3. Your competitors are reaping the benefits because they use a less expensive and modern method of delivery.
4. The operations of a business man are generally on a larger scale than the average professional man.
5. The rent in these apartments is much less than apartment hotels.
6. Our prices are lower than any store in town.
7. An advertisement in our magazine assures better results than any other periodical.
8. Rockefeller has more money than any American.

15. Rewrite the following sentences to correct errors in parallel structure. Phrases and clauses performing similar functions should be parallel in form.

1. Our company enjoys a good reputation for integrity and as a manufacturer of first-class shoes.
2. We hope we may have an order from you in the near future and that this information will be satisfactory.
3. The division of the material in this report is one of emphasis and for unmistakable clearness.
4. Won't you make out your initial order at once, by filling in the quantities of each item you can use, then slip the list into the inclosed envelope, and mail it immediately.
5. Not having been able to obtain, through banks or agencies at his disposal, any information concerning your good rating, and as he did not know the rules governing such cases as yours, the new manager sent the goods C. O. D.
6. The salesroom is fifty feet wide, eighty feet in length, and eighteen feet high.

16. Recast the following sentences, using subordination in place of the weak co-ordination. In no case break up the sentence into two sentences.

1. Last month I sent you an order and overpaid two dollars.
2. We always have an excellent collection of collies at our kennels and we are writing you about Bobbie and he is one of our prize dogs.
3. Our price for the collie is $55 and I assure you it is impossible to train pedigreed dogs for less than that amount.
4. No goods were bought from commission houses and all were converted by us, so I am thoroughly acquainted with the converting business.
5. My work is not congenial and for this reason I wish to change my position.
6. I graduated from high school and have taken courses in typewriting there.
7. My services have been satisfactory to my employer and he will recommend me.
8. Your repair man has not been here and it is over a week since you assured me he would call promptly.
9. I sent you the money for this man's subscription and his check was returned to me marked "insufficient funds."
10. A week ago you promised to send Mr. Jones and he has not appeared yet.
11. We are pleased to open an account for you and our usual credit terms are 3/10 n/30.
12. Rollins silks are made to wear and a great deal of care is taken in the manufacture of it.
13. We are glad to do anything we can to give you satisfaction and any request will always receive immediate attention.
14. The price of the printing was really cost price and so we wish to explain the course of the charge.
15. Why not rid yourself of the yearly gamble and increase your profits with the Xtra Hatcher?

17. The following sentences need to be condensed. State briefly why each is wordy. Then rewrite the sentence.

1. A greater volume of business results from the handling of nothing but fresh stock at all times.
2. We do no price cutting ever.
3. It is not to your advantage to buy in large job lots.
4. It is with pleasure that we acknowledge the receipt of your letter of July 7.
5. All our dealers are pleased with our service to them.

6. In answer to your letter of June 5, we are glad to state that we are sending you our complete catalogue.

7. Our bookkeeper called my attention to the fact that you had not yet paid your bill.

8. It is our desire to co-operate with you fully in every possible way we can and to make the sale of C. L. products very profitable to you as well as to us at all times.

9. We hope that this order is the beginning of mutually profitable and pleasant relations between us.

10. We thought it would be more convenient for you to deduct two dollars from your next remittance to us.

11. Our reason for changing the lacquer on the candlesticks was due to the fact that the material used in the sample was rejected for faulty and unsatisfactory ingredients.

12. Thank you very much for the interview that you gave me.

13. The letters have few mistakes in them.

14. This phrase contradicts the general meaning of the rest of the letter.

15. Examine the attached color chart and you will find a shade that will harmonize with the tone of your china and that will accentuate the beauty of your table decorations.

16. In this case a statement certifying to his character and general ability from his former employer would be of assistance to his obtaining a position where he is unknown.

17. While I am making strenuous efforts to eliminate unnecessary words and ideas, I often find that I very frequently excise so much that my sentence becomes obscure. (Compare Horace: In laboring to be concise, I become obscure.)

18. We are always ready and willing to make allowances for unusual circumstances that come up.

19. To extend another 30 days' credit would break down our policy which we have already established.

20. We have investigated the credit references that you gave us.

21. It is not generally customary to have letterheads in more than two colors.

22. Did you ever stop to think of the romance that may be found in the furniture which you see each day?

18. Condense the following letter:

Dear Sir:

We are glad to receive your request for our book, "Art in the Far East."

You will readily understand, we know, that so interesting and absolutely valuable a book as this must be very carefully treasured. Were it your very own, we are sure you would keep it from hands and eyes that you fear might mutilate it in any way.

To protect ourselves we have also tried to do this.

Consequently, after discussion, we decided to incorporate in our advertisement the suggestion that those who wish the book on approval would receive it if they gave us the following assurances:

To write a request for the book on an official business letterhead.
To state the writer's official position.

This we felt would be fair for every inquirer who wrote in for the valuable book.

Your name has been put on our list of those who are to receive the book as soon as we have received a letter conforming to our established requirements, which are stated above as well as in the advertisement you saw.

We hope to receive your letter soon so that we may have the privilege of sending you this valuable book on approval.

Very truly yours,

19. Miscellaneous faults in correctness and compactness. Carefully revise each sentence in the following letters. State exactly in what respect correctness is violated. Rewrite each sentence you find faulty.

1. We are wondering why you are withholding payment and ignore our request's. Perhaps there is some reason for your failure to make these payments, if this is the case we would be glad to know about it as it is note our desire to work a hardship on any of our customers.

2. This shirt is just like new, except in the two places you have mention, and if you have your wife when she washes the shirt to iron it out good over the split parts it will draw them togeather to a certain extent and will not be so noticeable, and you still will be able to receive plenty of service out of this shirt yet. We have just receive our new line of fibre silk shirts and I would like the pleasure of showing them to you. If it is entirely satisfactory to you Mr. Jerian we will give you an adjustment of 20% on a new shirt.

3. I would like to advise that my murchandice are not in well condition, and so I wont be possible to sell in this market, and furthermore these are not the same you showed me.

Now you must get back your murchandise. I am through with our

partnership. I thought that you were fair; that is why I trust your words, but I find out that all were bunk.

Waiting your further reply.

Very Truly,

4. All the time you hav had a feeling that prices wer too hy. Somebody wasn't running his business right. Retail prices convinst you of that.

John Ward shoes are bilt to the hyest standard for men's fine footwear.

5. Your's of February 5 to hand and sure want to thank you for kindly helping me out. I went through my stock of jackets and I find ten numbers that I did not as yet break into, and I was glad to avail myself of the chance you gave me to return these jackets for credit, and I hope to send half of the balance by the first of next month, or maybe sooner, as I am announcing a special sale to get in some cash so I can pay some of my bills and am certainly going to see to it that I send you all I can because you are willing to help me out.

6. I turned your letter over to Sta. F for them to look into the matter for you as I do not see any of the mail for the instructors it is taken direct to the buildings by the letter carriers. Sta. F returned your letter with the inclosed tracer for you to fill out and return to them.

7. Referring to the above association meeting in Chicago, Ill., December 29-31, we beg to call your particular attention to our "Twentieth Century Limited" train leaving New York at 2:45 p. m. arriving Chicago 9:45 a. m. next morning: extra fare on the Century $9.60.

8. Inclosed herewith kindly find policy of Burglary only Insurance for a period of four months in accordance with your recent order. Trusting same will meet with your approval and thanking you for this business, I remain,

9. In reply to your postal with reference to rubber tips, beg to say that we will trace same immediately.

Regarding the checking of the crotch mahogany furniture, we beg to say that it is impossible to change as we have not seen one piece that did not check as they all do more or less and same is not considered an imperfection whatever. The table certainly was in as good shape as could be when it left the store as the writer seen it himself and paid particular attention to it. The change of atmosphere has a very strong effect on all veneered furniture and maybe it was in a damp car which affected it. However, you will find this no difficulty, if you will get a finisher to rub it off in the house it will not have to leave the room at all. There is no better furniture made than you have for any money. You can proof this very easily by asking your dealers for any better

furniture made than the Royal Furniture Co., Grand Rapids, Mich makes which made your furniture.
Hope you will not find any difficulty in receiving rubber tips. We will give this our prompt attention.

10. Inclosed herewith kindly find policy of Public Liability and property damage protection, covering the operation of your new Franklin car which now completes your recent order for insurance protection.

Trusting same will meet with your approval and remaining at your further service, I am

20. Discuss the following sentences for correctness in the use of the hyphen:

1. This letter is well written.
2. This is a carefully constructed report.
3. The semiannual report of the company is well written.
4. This compartment is water tight.
5. The three inch pipe burst on the third floor.
6. The contract is, in that respect, iron clad.
7. The salesman must exercise self control.
8. She is a high school graduate.
9. You may leave the report tonight or tomorrow morning.
10. Inter urban cars are being supplanted by motor busses.

21. In each case justify the division, or substitute the correct form. Some of the following words are correctly divided, others not:

Punc-tuation	gin-gham
prin-ciple	com-mit-tee
intro-duc-tion	pre-sident,
bet-ween	rep-ort
busin-ess	cre-dit-or
pun-ish-able	mis-cell-aneous
con-sig-nment	dis-place-ment.

Chapter IV

THE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF BUSINESS WRITING: CHARACTER; CONCRETENESS; CHEERFULNESS

Style has been defined as that quality which makes your writing agreeably and effectively different. Style is personality revealing itself through language. Your style is agreeable if you think and feel vividly and express yourself naturally on the tone level best suited to your subject and your reader.

Character.

It is useless to argue as to whether business writing should or should not have style. Every writing has either good or bad style. The most matter-of-fact report or letter still reveals something of the personality of the author. In business writing there is not, of course, the same free play of personality as in literary masterpieces, or, to a lesser degree, in intimate letters between friends. The difference, however, is one of degree, not of kind.

The poet Wordsworth, for example, because he was a master of expression, revealed himself in every line of his poetry. A man quoted a few lines of Wordsworth's poetry to Coleridge, challenging him to identify the author. Coleridge immediately stated that he would recognize the quoted lines even though he found them alone in the Desert of Sahara. He recognized them because they possessed the unmistakable stamp of Wordsworth's personality. In the same way, men well versed in advertising can and do quickly identify unsigned copy. Certain well-defined stylistic traits enable them to recognize the individual author or the agency responsible for the copy.

Style, then, expresses individuality. This life-giving leaven vitalizes and invigorates expression. And here, particularly in large establishments, there is often an apparent conflict between individual character and house character. Although personal preferences must necessarily accommodate themselves to house character in many ways, the writer must beware of suppressing his individuality. He should guard individuality jealously as his most prized asset.

A real danger lies in the fact that correspondents, once they have hit upon what they please to call personality in style, hold themselves forever after to a narrow groove. Their letters reveal a sameness in sentence structure and choice of words. Such habits are negative. They kill style, for style is as flexible as a living being. Human interest cannot be secured by a mechanical repetition of sentence forms, and mummified expressions cannot give a true ring of sincerity.

Words are common property. The unabridged dictionary contains no fewer than 400,000 words, and the ordinary desk dictionary puts at the writer's disposal no less than 80,000 modern words. When, however, words are combined into sentences, the character of the writer emerges. The sentence is the unit of style. It is the result of the writer's personality at work upon words selected from the common fund.

Character, therefore, is manifested, first, in the kind of words chosen, and secondly, in the way these are combined into phrases, clauses, and sentences, and these again into paragraphs. A weak character chooses commonplace, even hackneyed, expressions. A strong character finds new combinations of words that precisely and vigorously convey the thought.

Colorless.

Thank you for your letter of the 8th. Inclosed herewith is my first lesson, which please return at your earliest convenience, as I want your comments.

Character.

Many thanks for your letter of October 8.

I am anxiously awaiting your comment on my first lesson, which I am inclosing.

You may be assured that I am giving this course the best there is in me, and that I shall fully appreciate your assistance.

Concreteness.

Specific, concrete words are the life of style. Colorful, image-making words vitalize expression. Imaginative treatment glorifies the most prosaic material and lifts it out of the rut of the commonplace.

To vivify your sentences, observe the following requirements:

1. See details. See details clearly. See them vividly.
2. Explain the abstract in concrete terms.
3. Clarify your thought by use of simple figures of speech.
4. Make the commonplace unusual by saying an old thing in a new way.
5. Appeal to the senses. Bread, for example, is not sold by price and weight, but through nose and eyes.

Be specific.—Before he can phrase clearly, the writer must learn to see clearly. Because specific details, vividly phrased, make a definite impression, he must train himself to close observation. An eye that does not telegraph a clear-cut image to the brain is not a good servant. How can the writer choose descriptive words with precision if a detailed image is not first imprinted on the mind?

One significant detail clearly imprinted upon the writer's consciousness can be pointedly phrased so as to make a more vivid impression than a whole page of explanation. A sentence used by a company insuring property titles illustrates this:

Every stroke of a pen for generations back, in the recording of your property, is scrutinized by our experts when we insure your title.

The writer who captured this significant detail and featured it successfully could not be guilty of the following vague statement, which studiously avoids details:

As you have made no purchases from us for some time now, we are wondering if everything has been satisfactory.

This sentence reveals a fundamental inability to see the specific details that make a definite appeal to the customer. A writer with an eye and a mind for details phrased this part of his letter as follows:

In reviewing our accounts with customers, we notice that your account has been inactive during the past six months. If, therefore, our goods have not pleased you, or if the high standard of service you expect from us has not in every way met your individual needs, we shall appreciate being informed as to how we have fallen short.

The following advertisement shows how sprightly phrasing can make even a formidable array of dry details interesting.

Our New Book of Types and our Book of New Types are just off the press and far off the rutted road. They are a veritable Encyclopedia of Composition, containing, in addition to an army of leaden soldiers in serried ranks, a plethora of ornaments, borders, and initials, together with the entire series of our advertisements in *Printers' Ink*. Thus these two books show types not merely loafing around the case, but working for business. They comprise 232 pages, 5½ by 8½, loose-leaf (to permit the insertion of fresh material as issued from time to time), and are bound with a pebbled embossed black cover. Your name is stamped in gold upon the front, each copy is numbered, and the edition is limited to the *cognoscenti* who are intrigued by the pungent perfume of ink and the musical murmur of a proof-sheet.

Vague.	*Specific.*
We offer a wide range of color selections from which to choose.	Here you find green, henna, or black with Japanese mink fur—navy blue with natural gray squirrel fur—or medium brown with beaver fur.

Avoid the abstract appeal.—When confronted with an abstraction, present it concretely. Because abstractions are bloodless, they lack vitality to stir the reader. They appeal to the intellect only, leaving the emotions cold. Invisible, impalpable, intangible, imponderable as they are to the five senses, abstractions cannot awaken the impressions of form, color, and solidity necessary in the human appeal.

You can, for example, carry on a lengthy abstract discussion of the Seven Deadly Sins without giving one in a hundred of the ordinary run of mortals as much as a vague idea of what they are. But let a Spenser portray these sins in the guise of men, appropriately dressed and riding in parade on animals symbolizing the different sins, and the impression is

definite, fresh, and vivid. Spenser interprets them in terms of flesh and blood.

Bank promotion men now realize that thrift propaganda cannot be made enticing by an appeal to thrift alone. In itself thrift must ever rank low as an appeal. Thrift is an abstract thing. Preachments on the virtues of thrift have therefore been replaced by definite, concrete appeals. These appeals take the tangible form of Christmas clubs and vacation clubs. Where thrift as an abstract virtue failed to increase deposits, the definite objective associated with the Christmas club idea has swelled the number of depositors.

Use figures of speech.—There is no more effective way of making your appeal concrete than by the use of figures of speech, which, however, must be simple, compact, and appropriate.

So a radio manufacturer writes concerning his loudspeaker:

"Clear as a Stradivarius in tone."

His purpose is to create a favorable impression of his loudspeaker. The comparison links the reader's established favorable impression of the clear tone of the Stradivarius with the favorable impression the seller is trying to create in the reader's mind regarding the loudspeaker. The image suggested by "Stradivarius" is concrete, but at the same time pleasant and dignified. By associating the loudspeaker with the undisputed musical perfection of a Stradivarius violin, the comparison creates a definite impression of clear tone value.

To emphasize the importance of a clearly defined corethought about which to group supporting ideas, drive home your thought by visualizing it in terms of natural history.

Like the modern piece of copy, the essay grows around a central object or idea as the cocoon grows around the silkworm.

Or again, concerning the salesman:

If one appeal fails, he tries another. His quiver is full of arrows barbed with different selling points.

Notice that this is an implied comparison.

James Wallen goes to the nursery for an illuminating comparison:

Years ago, when American advertising was in the soothing syrup age, the English proprietor of Pears Soap did a revolutionary thing. He deftly stepped ahead of the procession by purchasing a painting by Sir John Millais.

Appeal to the senses.—The commonplace is made interesting and unusual by using colorful words, with a strong appeal to the senses. Old things can be phrased in a new way if the words are fresh and stimulating. Mr. Robert R. Updegraff calls attention to the value of the sense appeal in the following story of how modern methods superseded the old secretive procedure in bakeries.

Along came a man with imagination about people, and turned the bakery inside out. He thought people would like to see their bread baked and to know that it was fresh and clean, and so he put the ovens and the bakers in the front window. Then he went farther. I am told that it was not until he took this last step that he was completely successful. He cut holes in the fronts of his open-face bakeries and set in blowers to blow the smell of the fresh-baked bread out to the sidewalk to lure people in to buy. This man merely applied to bread the same selling psychology that has been the success of the delicatessen, the cafeteria, the glass-walled popcorn machine, the "hot-dog" man, and the modern bakery-restaurant with its windows full of high-art pastry. He recognized the important fact that food is sold to the masses through their eyes and their noses; and with keen marketing imagination he put these two purchasing senses effectively to work in selling this staple of life.

Just as the baker prospered by means of actual stimulation of the senses, the business writer may succeed by putting his imagination to work on words. He can paint a suggestive word picture that places his product enticingly before the reader. In the following advertisement, Sun-Maid Raisin clusters are represented alluringly as an indispensable part of the Christmas dinner. The copy does not talk about raisins. They are represented in terms of the housekeeper's experience. The appeal to sight and taste is couched in definite, concrete words, and it is enriched and dignified by the appeal to sentiment and age-old custom.

How well they kept the glad feast day in the olden time.

There was the boar's head, stuffed with chestnuts, a bright red apple in his mouth. The roasted peacock was there, with its tail spread

like a gorgeous fan. The parti-colored pastries, the spiced and honeyed wines—

Then, the best loved delicacy of all—the "raisyns" in full, beautiful clusters brought from sunny, far-off lands.

Like the lords and ladies of old, we still give the festive bowl of clustered raisins an honored place at Christmas time.

In golden California, in clusters of matchless beauty, the grapes grow to the fullness of their rich, ripe flavor. The clean, mellow California sunshine transforms the royal fruit, with all its stored-up goodness, into Sun-Maid Raisins—large and plump and juicy.

In the following, the appeal to taste and sight is again mingled with the appeal to sentiment. Notice how delicately the comparison of the factory product with the home product is made favorable to the former.

Luscious red tomatoes—ripened by the sun in old-fashioned gardens—picked in the morning with the dew still upon them—delicately seasoned and spiced just enough to bring out the ripened flavor of fresh tomatoes—the full flavor of home-grown tomatoes.

Taste a half-teaspoonful of Blue Label—smack your lips over it—get the full sweet tomato zest.

Now try the other. If it's your own home-made or Mother's, you will see for yourself how well they compare and why Blue Label is called the ketchup with the full flavor of home-grown tomatoes.

Appeals to the senses of smell, touch, and hearing can be made equally effective.

Smell: When you sit down to a generous dish of Wheatena, your appetite is whetted by the delicate aroma of whole wheat.

Touch: Hansen Gloves—warm, friendly. The Hansen has been called the Friendly Glove. It clings without binding, wears well, and lasts long.

Hearing: This noiseless typewriter eliminates that metallic staccato so irritating in large and small offices.

In the following excerpt from a Clicquot Club advertisement the skillful writer runs the gamut of sense appeals. His compact sentences are rich in suggestion because he shows restraint. He has gained power by limiting himself to a few well-chosen words that create a definite sense impression.

What a shimmery, deep, rich gold it is! What a satisfying ginger tang, and life, and sparkle it has. . . . Some like it chilled. Some like the cold ice to clink against the glass and nubble against the lips.

Cheerfulness.

The cartoonist's Mrs. Gibbs, on the "funny" page, is not precisely an exemplar of human felicity. Her object in life is to discover shortcomings, oversights, faults, and weaknesses in the character and daily life of the cheerful but much-pestered Mr. Gibbs. Her type, both male and female, is identified by the picturesque tag "killjoy." Mrs. Gibbs could never make a success of business writing. Her point of view is wrong.

Anyone who has attended a convention of the Associated Ad Men of the World, or of the Direct by Mail Advertising Association, is exhilarated by the pervasive spirit of optimism, good will, and service genuinely characterizing the men and women who follow the profession of business writing. In fact, their instinct for helping man to live comfortably and happily is so highly developed and is so patently revealed in all they say and write, that humorous comment is not only tempting but also illuminating. The following quotation describes a perfect day lived in the millennium pictured in modern business writings.

Friend wife awakes in the morning with a smile after a most refreshing night's rest on a Summons Iron Bed. She is awakened by the merry tinkle of a Big James alarm clock, which is not only infallibly punctual, but also tunefully musical. She arises, smiling, and uses Bear's soap, which cleans the skin and clears the disposition. Smiling happily, she lifts a steaming breakfast out of the Hotstuff Fireless Cooker, and we sit down, smiling affectionately at each other, to a table set with Dodger's Plate, which is guaranteed for twenty years. We then consume some delicious Moonstruck oranges, in addition to fireless-cooked Baker's Oats, with special smiles appropriate to each. Next, I don my Snob's hat, my Business College Brand Coat, and smiling nobly, kiss friend wife on the Airless Weatherstripped doorstep. She smiles encouragingly and affectionately at me as I set off for the job in my Ask-a-Man-Who-Knows-a-Man-Who-Owns-One, and then she goes back and smiles ecstatically as she turns on the Shakemup Automatic Dishwasher. After a hard day at the office, which consists of smiling suitably while I press automatic buttons that operate labor-saving and efficiency devices, I smoothlessly and stoplessly glide back to the dear little Own-Your-Own Home. Wifey stands in the doorway, smiling delightedly and revealing the beautiful results of constant use of No Pyorrhea for Me. I smile back at her, demonstrating

the satisfactory quantity as well as quality of our tooth powder used by two. I note wifey's wonderful complexion and upon being assured that it is due to Peachblow Face Powder and nothing else, I kiss her. She kisses me. We kiss each other. Then we smile. In the evening we smile interestedly at a Parahill Picture and go home smiling, no matter how sad it was. We hop into our Summons Twin Beds and drift into peaceful slumber, smiling, ye gods, still smiling. We don't need to sleep. All night we smile. Life is too happy for sleep. We might miss something to smile at.

In the struggle of competition there is no place for the negative-minded man. That man alone survives who has a positive, forward-looking vision. The function of business writing is to build up. Its aim, especially in reports, advertising copy, and business letters, is constructive. Optimism, not pessimism, overcomes obstacles. The smile, which is cheerful, attracts; the frown, which is gloomy, repels. Darkness is repellent; light, attractive. A generous spirit of service wins orders where grudging concession loses them. Faith in your firm and its product stimulates you to greater effort; a suspicious attitude palsies activity. The open-minded approach makes satisfactory adjustment possible in places where a prejudiced attitude stiffens opposition and deepens the gloom.

1. **Use cheerful material.**—Avoid the negative element in point of view and in substance. You must see the bright side of your problem and be able to select constructive details that impress upon the reader the positive values of your appeal. Imbue your sentences with an infectious optimism expressed with zest. Throw light on darkness. Darkness cannot be banished, but, as Emerson observed, it can be surrounded with light. Troubles there are in plenty, within and without the adjustment department. By using ingenuity, analysis, and vision based on imaginative insight, you can always find a positive solution.

The cheerful man is doubly blessed. He serves his firm at the same time that he makes the customer see light. In 1924, for example, the New Jersey Public Service Electric and Gas Company installed a new system of meter-reading, bill delivery, and accounting. Obviously, such a change on a statewide scale involved considerable confusion and trouble to customers. To avoid creation of ill will, the company analyzed the problem in all its details. The purpose was to find

not so much how ill will could be avoided, but rather how good will could be created as a result of the contemplated sweeping changes. Full *consideration* was given to the customer's point of view in the following successful constructive appeal, which was formulated and widely advertised throughout New Jersey before and during the progress of the change.

Now all meters are read the latter part of each month. It is proposed to distribute this work, together with billing and accounting, evenly throughout the whole month. Thus more attention can be given in individual cases where necessary congestion will be avoided, and the customer's time will be saved.

Under the new plan, customers will receive their bills monthly, within a few days, instead of ten days or two weeks, after meters have been read. This enables them to keep a closer check on consumption of electricity and gas, and to make more timely comparisons of bills with their household or business budget.

A feature of the new system that will appeal to many customers who use both gas and electricity on the same premises will be the use of a single itemized bill, instead of two bills each month as at present, to cover the two services.

These and other positive appeals were utilized to impress upon consumers the desire of the company to furnish the best possible service. *Cheerfulness* and *consideration,* working hand in hand, put consumers in a receptive frame of mind that assured a minimum of friction and a maximum of co-operation.

In this connection it will be observed that the advantages accruing to the company are not mentioned. Yet the new plan offered very real advantages in the possible saving of money through the employment of fewer meter readers and billing clerks, reduction in amount of printing and paper, and avoidance of end-of-the-month office congestion. The *we* elements, which, from the consumer's point of view, are negative in this problem, were ignored in favor of the *you* elements, which are positive, in that they establish a cheerful customer attitude.

A practical application of cheerfulness enabled the Truly Warner hat company to break a temporary buyers' strike. An early autumn had caused the resurrection of last year's felt

hat, which though shabby was not discarded for a new felt when the fall season opened.

The usual copy wouldn't bring the buyers in large numbers. Something extraordinary had to be done. Good-humored copy to "kid" the buyer out of his old, battered hat was decided upon. . . . Briggs, the cartoonist, was made the critic. A series of advertisements was prepared with the heading, "See Yourself as Briggs Sees You." Some of this cartoonist's best-known series, such as "When a Feller Needs a Friend" and "That Guiltiest Feeling", were used to show the man who clung to last year's headpiece that he wasn't exactly a Beau Brummell.

The new sales message was put over with a chuckle instead of the frown it might have caused with a more direct attack on the old-hat habit.

Copy designed to sell life, fire, and accident insurance is too often based exclusively on the negative elements in the problem. The appeal of companies administering trust funds, wills, and estates is too frequently painful in suggestion. Unpleasant suggestion also dominates unnecessarily the sale of safety devices for factories. Somber copy repels. Attention is won more effectively by presentation of the pleasing elements surrounding even accident insurance and tire chains. Although the appeal to fear may be legitimate with certain products and services, ingenuity reveals many attractive features, the appeal of which is positive, and therefore strong.

"In a series of advertisements for a campaign on special hospital appliances in medical journals, an advertiser has introduced radio atmosphere admirably. Soldiers, for example, recovering from troubles of recent war, are pictured 'tuning in,' as they lie in their cots. It is a well-known fact that radio sets are being supplied to individual cots in many modern hospitals, and these dull, listless, and even unpleasant scenes are high-lighted and made welcome by this radio touch."

2. **Use cheerful phrases.**—The tone of the courteous sentence is cheerful. Negatively defined, "courtesy" means the absence of anything that may offend the reader. Blunt, brusque statements are tactless and certain to alienate sympathy. Even when these are avoided, the writer must guard against a superior, offish air, not perhaps expressed in actual phrases, but nevertheless felt by the reader. Never lose patience, even when answering an irate or uppish correspondent.

A soft answer turneth away wrath. Criticism of any kind, expressed or implied, makes an unfavorable impression. This is essentially true in credit and adjustment letters. When making an adjustment or answering an inquiry, avoid phrases like "we are at a loss to understand," "we cannot understand," or the still more offensive locutions "which you state" and "which you say," not to mention "which you complain." When the writer is faced by an unpleasant situation, he does well to remember that courteous sentences are shock-absorbers.

Positively defined, *courtesy* means a genuine willingness to render service. The letter as a whole, and in all its parts, should breathe the spirit of helpfulness. In the sale of many products, the determining factor is service. It follows that the writer must make it a fundamental rule to impress his reader through the patient cultivation of cheerfulness and a wholesome desire to help. It has been well said that the customer's money is bigger than anything you have to offer except service.

True courtesy is a point of view, an attitude, a state of mind. The writer assumes that the reader is fair-minded and honest. By a frank, patient, and sympathetic approach, the writer assumes the rôle of friend and makes constructive suggestions, welcome because helpful. He shows an effort to render genuine service. Though phrases alone are useless, their use emphasizes the spirit of courtesy. It should not be forgotten that the familiar words "kindly," "please," and "thank you" never grow wearisome when they are used not mechanically but sincerely. Whenever you honestly can, brighten your letters with "it is a pleasure" or "we are pleased to."

Conviction.—A letter is written to be read. It is read, and its message carries conviction, if the seven essential qualities of business writing are incorporated. When these qualities are properly balanced and proportioned according to the needs of the writing in hand, clearness and interest are realized to the point where the reader gives willing consent. He accepts the letter as adequate. He is convinced because he is satisfied. Whenever you fail to observe one or the other essential quality, you weaken your message in proportion to the need of the omitted quality.

Among the most admired letters of Abraham Lincoln are

many business letters composed in response to the routine requirements of his office. These letters, however, are not routine in conception, style, or effect. They reveal the essential qualities of good business writing. As examples of the executive type of business letter, they reflect masterfully the indispensable qualities of style. As a result, people often forget that they are business letters, and admire them as examples of literary art. Perhaps the best known of Lincoln's letters is the letter to Mrs. Bixby, of Boston.

November 21, 1864.

Dear Madam:

I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

Abraham Lincoln.

The following observations were suggested by a lecture delivered at the Milwaukee meeting of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World by Captain John W. Gorby.

Lincoln's letter is as simple as A, B, C, and as clear as the summer sky.

1. The words do not attract attention to themselves. The reader sees the thought through them as through a perfectly transparent glass. The language is *correct*. It conforms to the rules of grammar and observes the principles of rhetoric.

2. The letter is intensely direct. It is *compact*. Every word counts in the final impression.

3. Lincoln's letter is climactic. It moves to a goal. Every idea and thought is selected and arranged so as to focus on the closing sentence. The letter has *construction*.

4. Lincoln shows *consideration* for the mother. The great heart of Lincoln was profoundly moved by her sacrifice. The appeal to the emotions is human because it is based on genuine sympathy.

5. The personality of Lincoln is stamped upon every phrase. His individuality reveals itself as fully as in the Gettysburg Address. His letter has *character* because he was himself when he wrote.

6. His message throws light on darkness. Lincoln understands the mental state of the mother. With dignity and restraint he suggests consolation in the name of the Republic. In the name of the nation, he offers what *cheer* he can.

7. Lincoln states facts with authority. The letter carries *conviction* because his *compact* sentences breathe *consideration* and *character* in a message of solemn *cheer*.

Many other gems of the epistolary art are found in the collected letters of Lincoln. If Samuel Johnson were here to advise young people on the best way of cultivating a good letter style, he would probably say, "Whoever wishes to attain to a good letter style, simple but not commonplace, dignified but not stilted, and powerful but not forced, must give his days and nights to the letters of Abraham Lincoln."

Exercises for Oral and Written Analysis.

1. Make this appeal specific and concrete:

The trip is so interesting and comfortable and the rates are so attractive that you will enjoy the journey to California more than ever this winter.

2. What quality of style makes the following selections attractive? Just how?

(*a*) The Tudor Shakespeare is planned for you as a companionable volume. As you grasp it in your palm or turn its leaves to its clear, open type, it greets you with a friendliness that makes you want to take it along.

It is compact, slightly flexible, of grained red leather cover with gold titles. It is equally at home on your library table or traveling with you wherever you may go.

Tuck one in your pocket when traveling. A surprising amount of reading is done in this way. The Tudor Shakespeare is well adapted to travel with you.

Before closing your suitcase you can always find room handily near

the top. Then wherever you are you will not be lacking in company. The Tudor Shakespeare is good company, and a versatile companion.

(*b*) It costs a little more to sugar-cure Ferris Hams and Bacon in the old-fashioned way and to smoke them slowly over aromatic hickory; but the high-speed forcing treatment would lose that luscious savor—that smoky richness—which the name "Ferris" has meant for three generations.

(*c*) And now you can travel to California in comfort—1100 cinderless, smokeless miles, behind giant, oil-burning locomotives.

(*d*) Big Ben is the comrade of ambition. Big Ben is the friendly adviser to young men. In the morning of business life the magnet of success draws them into the world. Youth sets out to prove its pluck. Big Ben of Westclox knows each ambition. Big Ben understands each dream. He's a loyal guardian of high ideals—a faithful business guide. He says a good beginning is half the doing of a thing. His part in life is starting each day right.

3. Analyze each of the following for character. What kind of personality is revealed in each?

(*a*) Pressure of office work prevented my attending last evening's session of the class, but I trust that the essay, herewith, is in time to get under the wire.

(*b*)

My dear Sir:

I have read your play. Oh, my dear Sir.

Charles Dillingham.

(*c*) Thomas Jefferson gives this writing desk to Joseph Coolidge, Jr., as a memorial of affection. It was made from a drawing of his own by Ben Randall, cabinet-maker of Philadelphia, with whom he first lodged on his arrival in that city in May, 1776, and is the identical one on which he wrote the Declaration of Independence. Politics, as well as Religion, has its superstitions. These, gaining strength with time, may, one day, give imaginary value to this relic for its association with the birth of the Great Charter of our Independence.

Monticello, November 18, 1825.

(*d*) The consciousness of "taking pen in hand" often drives away "to come again another day" all the moral spontaneity and sparkle of personality. (*James Wallen*)

(*e*)

Dear Michael Monahan:

I shall value your book as a memento of a choice spirit. May many and many a sheaf of papyrus spring up from your wit and wisdom to enlarge men's minds and teach them tolerance and sympathy and understanding.

All prosperity attend you in the New Year, and the good wishes of

Your grateful friend,

Eden Phillpotts

All but the first of the foregoing quotations are taken by permission from an article by James Wallen in *Printers' Ink,* January 1, 1920.

4. Compare and contrast the following letters as examples of consideration.

(*a*) We have the very best to be offered in climate and water advantages.

We have three modern cities in this county, all located together on the Minto River, and all together having a population of over 18,000.

We have splendid churches, schools, hotels, apartments, golf course, clubs, parks, and public library.

We hope you will inform us if we can be of further service.

(*b*) St. Petersburg is beautifully situated on Pinellas Peninsula, bordered on the east by Tampa Bay, on the west by Boca Cuiga Bay, with the Gulf of Mexico only two miles from the western edge of the city. Sunshine, fresh air, and a wonderful climate are here combined with the advantages of a modern city. As the great cities of the north are only a few hours distant, the business man can spend at least part of the time in St. Petersburg with his family, and still keep in touch with affairs at home.

The outstanding charm of the Sunshine City is its spirit of friendliness and good will. It is easy to get acquainted—to make social contacts. The great societies formed of the visitors from the various states foster this spirit and provide entertainment for their members. The civic clubs, the city organization, and the Chamber of Commerce provide numerous festivities. The churches extend a welcoming hand. If you wish any specific information not found in our booklet, please write us. We are here to serve you.

5. Find the character of Samuel Johnson in the language, tone, point of view, and substance of the following letters.

February 7, 1755.

(*a*) To the Right Honorable Earl of Chesterfield,

My Lord:

I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of *The World,* that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre;*—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in publick, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a Patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the Publick should consider me as owing that to a Patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much

exultation, my Lord, Your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

Sam. Johnson.

(*b*) Samuel Johnson to Bennet Langton, Esq.

Dear Sir:

I have an old amanuensis in great distress. I have given what I think I can give, and begged till I cannot tell where to beg again. I put into his hands this morning four guineas. If you could collect three guineas more, it would clear him from his present difficulty. I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

May 21, 1775. Sam. Johnson.

(*c*) Samuel Johnson to James Macpherson.

Mr. James Macpherson:

I received your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel; and what I cannot do for myself the law shall do for me. I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian.

What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think so still. For this opinion I have given my reasons to the publick, which I dare you to refute. Your rage I defy. Your abilities, since your *Homer,* are not so formidable; and what I hear of your morals, inclines me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but to what you shall prove. You may print this if you will.

Sam. Johnson.

6. Just how does the following sentence from a soap advertisement illustrate *cheerfulness?* What negative pitfalls has the writer deftly avoided?

While few women really want to look younger than they are, no woman wants to look older than she is.

7. Which of the following sentences shows personality? Why?

(*a*) It would give us great pleasure to have you as a guest at our hotel.

(*b*) I shall be glad to reserve one of these modern rooms for you whenever you give the word.

Is there a difference in tone? What is it?

8. Rewrite the following sentences so as to remove the negative element:

(*a*) We were glad to receive your undated letter.

(*b*) In reply to your undated letter we are sending you one of our catalogs.

9. The following sentences are from letters selling an open-air house that can be folded and carried on the running board of an automobile. Point out the negative element. Rewrite the sentences, stressing the positive elements.

(*a*) Its sturdy but light framework renders this canvas sleeping tent fully resistant to high winds.

(*b*) You at once dispense with certain trips because you feel that, since they cannot be taken in one day, they are not comfortable. This idea is wrong. With one of our canvas tents your travel radius is not limited. After several hours of weary travel in a motor car there is nothing more refreshing than a night spent in one of our tents.

(*c*) When you close your eyes you may rest assured that no wind during the night can harm your firmly anchored tent.

(*d*) Unless one is hardened to outdoor life, camping is not comfortable. With one of our tents, anyone can enjoy the health-giving sleep of the country or woods, and without any of the discomforts so often found by city dwellers in the great out-of-doors.

10. Does the following paragraph convince and attract? Do you like to read this kind of copy? Can you minimize the negative element and still convince the reader that he must have liability and accident insurance?

The city street, the country lane, the open highway—all have their individual and ever-present hazards for the motorist, however careful he may be. The very uncertainty of these risks makes them all the more dangerous. You can never tell when your turn will come.

11. Which of the alternative forms is preferable from the point of view of consideration? Why? Can you write an improved form?

(*a*) Your order will receive careful attention.
Your order is receiving careful attention.

(*b*) We received your order of October 14 and will give it prompt attention.
We received your order of October 14 and are giving it our prompt attention.

12. Analyze the following advertisement (Worthington Pump and Machinery Corporation), by applying the test of the seven essential qualities of business writing. Do not hesitate to criticize this good sales story. Suggest improvements where you think they can be made. In each case, however, put your suggestion to the test by rewriting the passage you are improving.

For thousands of years the ancient Egyptians, a great people, had confidence in the emblem—the Wingèd Globe.

It meant two great things, which, combined, meant one still greater. It meant Power, and Safety, and, linking these two as one, it meant *Protection.*

When a man saw this Wingèd Globe carved or painted above a door, he knew it was a sign (a *pledge*) that after he had passed through that door he would be protected at all times while he was within that house.

Today, this same device—of the Worthington symbol—is known in every corner of the world, in all countries and to all men who seek and find trustworthy machinery, the pumps, the condensers, the compressors, the engines, the meters, the hundred-and-one large or small intricate or simple power devices which must be *trusted* to operate efficiently, economically, and dependably.

This design, with its tremendous significance, was chosen by the Worthington Pump and Machinery Corporation as its symbol because it possessed that significance, because it meant something which all sound business men appreciate—because it represented an invisible thing which, nevertheless, exists in and is part of every Worthington device, no matter how inexpensive that device may be.

That invisible thing, which you also buy and install when you purchase and operate any Worthington product, is a *quality of protection* of your investment and of your business operation which that product may be *trusted* to give you, and which it possesses because it has been designed as a result of long experience, and manufactured, in good faith, of proper materials.

If you, who continually require any kind of Pumps, or Compressors, Condensers, Feedwater Heaters, Meters, Diesel Engines, will write to us, we will promptly and gladly send you printed matter which illustrates and describes any or all of these products which are particularly suited to your needs, and we will quote you prices which are no higher than the actual investment and operation value of these products.

13. Visualize a huge gas tank, a water tower, or a huge storage tank used, for example, by the Standard Oil Company.

Then read the following advertisement of Lancaster Steel Plate Construction Tanks:

For thousands of years the Sphinx has guarded the banks of the Nile—a huge landmark that defies the ravages of Time. The ancient Egyptians were masters in the art of creating Permanency.

The secret of building durability and time-resisting qualities into their works did not die with the passing of the Sphinx and pyramid builders.

Lancaster Engineers have built those same characteristics into the famous Lancaster Tanks—unsurpassed examples of steel plate construction.

Lancaster Tanks are made to withstand the ceaseless action of the elements. Extremes of heat and cold cannot budge a Lancaster Tank from the performance of its duty—nor render it less safe. They are bound to give continuous service throughout generations.

It is well worth your time to write for Lancaster data on tanks—it will save you money eventually.

14. Apply the test of *concreteness* to the foregoing advertisement. Is the association of ideas (imagery), invoked by the writer, effective? Is the effect incongruous because the sphinx is built of stone and the tank of metal?

Is the closing sentence an anti-climax (too great a drop from the dignified text)?

If the Sphinx is considered as a work of art (Is it?) and the Lancaster Tank as an industrial (manufactured) product, is the parallel convincing?

Find incongruous features wisely ignored by the writer. Has he made the best use of all the parallel qualities at his disposal? (The Sphinx is a monument to Egyptian engineering genius, is it not?)

Chapter V

DRESSING THE LETTER

The importance of neat dress.—The well-planned, vividly phrased letter deserves an attractive dress. The dress of the letter is no less important than that of the salesman. Like the well-dressed salesman, the well-dressed letter has a better chance of winning receptive attention than one that is shabby or freakish in appearance. The letter which appears in disordered array; the letter that looks stiff and angular; the letter that is freakish or flashy, like a salesman with scarlet cravat and scarecrow waistcoat—all these receive attention, to be sure, but not the desirable attention conducive to receptive reading. Faults in the physical make-up of the letter jeopardize success. Correct appearance makes for success.

Two severe tests.—Every business letter undergoes two severe tests: one, when the reader first looks at the letter sheet; the other, when he has completed reading the message. Both moments are vital. The first impression is made by the physical appearance of the letter at the moment the sheet is unfolded.

The writer obtains a favorable initial reaction by attending to the dress of the letter. First impressions may often be, and in fact often are, deceptive. Nevertheless, the first glimpse the reader has of the letter determines, to an appreciable extent, his attitude toward the message.

Guiding principles.—The observance of certain guiding principles makes the physical make-up attractive. Attention is captured by applying the requirements of good usage, utility, and beauty.

The standard letter form.—The layout of the letter should conform to good usage, which is determined by the practice of leading authorities. The dress is correct when it, as well, conforms to the most approved modern practice. Letter form, like grammar, is governed by certain conven-

THE BECK DUPLICATOR CO.
MANUFACTURERS
476 BROADWAY

NEW YORK

July 22, 1925.

Dr. A. C. Babenroth,
301 University Hall,
Columbia University,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Doctor Babenroth:

Wouldn't you be interested in seeing a demonstration of a new Duplicator which will make copies of all classroom work without the use of stencils?

The SPEEDOGRAPH is used so widely in schools and colleges that we have arranged an exhibit at Columbia during the Summer Session. It is a fine opportunity for all to see the SPEEDOGRAPH in actual use, and we are especially anxious to show it to the members of the faculty.

The process is clean and easy. Almost any one in the school can operate the machine the first time he tries. It will make copies of any handwriting or typewriting - Maps, Music, Charts - in 4 or 5 colors at one time - Notices to Teachers, Examination Questions, Cards, Study Sheets - in fact, every department of educational work can make profitable use of a SPEEDOGRAPH.

Our exhibit is in Booth 47, in the Auxiliary Gymnasium, University Hall.

Come in at your earliest opportunity and see if you do not agree with us that the SPEEDOGRAPH is the most versatile and practical duplicating method for any school purpose.

We will allow a special discount of 10% during the Summer Session. Orders taken subject to confirmation.

Sincerely yours,

THE BECK DUPLICATOR CO.

SJB:DDA

Style Study I.—Block form.

Single-spaced lines; double-spaced paragraphs and units. Closed punctuation. Modern but conservative. Clean, symmetrical, and perfectly balanced on the letter sheet.

tions, which the writer ignores at the risk of oddity. Odd layouts based on personal preference conflict with correctness. They serve no purpose but to call attention from the contents to the form of the letter. The ideal layout is as unobtrusive

as the frame of a picture. Modern practice, therefore, has evolved a standard letter form, which is conventional as regards the essentials of stationery, letterhead, the number of units in the letter form, and the manner of their distribution on the letter sheet.

When choice is allowed, as it is within limits established by modern usage, preference should be given on the basis of utility and beauty. Of two correct forms, the choice should fall to the more useful and symmetrical. Good usage, for example, allows the indentation of the inside address and of paragraphs. It is, however, also correct to use the block form in the inside address, salutation, and body of the letter; that is, the form in which the first line of the paragraph begins even with all the other lines.

By the test of utility, the block form is preferable. It saves the typist's time. By the test of beauty the block form is also superior in typewritten letters, because it gives a clear-cut, symmetrical appearance. In pen-written letters, on the other hand, the indented layout looks better. A survival from the days of pen-written letters, the indented layout will be superseded ultimately by the block layout because of the superior advantages of the latter in the increased utility and beauty of the typed letter.

Where correctness permits choice of alternatives, care should be taken to follow a consistent usage. Thus, if open punctuation is used in the heading, it should also be used in the inside address. By open punctuation is meant the omission of commas and periods at the ends of lines in the heading and inside address. The omission has in its favor the fact that end punctuation is not essential and that time is saved.

When, however, considerations of utility and beauty conflict, choice should be given to the layout that looks better. By the test of utility, for example, it is advantageous to begin the complimentary close flush at the left margin. Yet the test of beauty reveals at once the fact that the complimentary close in this position unbalances the layout. The effect is unpleasant because the layout lacks symmetry.

A proper adjustment of black and white spaces gives balance and symmetry, which please the reader's eye and put him in a receptive mood. Margins and spacings require careful attention. According to whether the message is long or short,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

ADDRESS REPLY TO THE FORESTER AND REFER TO

WASHINGTON

PZ

December 28, 1923.

Mr. A. Charles Babenroth,
710 Journalism,
Columbia University,
New York City.

Dear Sir:

In compliance with my letter of October 12, I take pleasure in enclosing a copy of the Report of the Forester.

If we can be of any further service to you please feel free to call upon us.

Very truly yours,

Thomas H. Gill

THOMAS H. GILL
In Charge of Information.

Enclosure.

Style Study II.—A short letter with closed punctuation. Indented inside address and paragraphs. Double-spaced lines in the body.

the letter centers on the longer or shorter axis of the sheet. Before spreading the dictated material on the sheet, the capable transcriber estimates the number of words in the message, and the number of lines to be typed. He visualizes the letter before he types it. He secures balance through perfect adjustment of black and white spaces.

Stationery.—The paper for ordinary business letters should be as good quality stock as the writer can afford, white, unruled, and 8½ by 11 inches in size. When properly folded, this sheet fits the standard envelope, 6½ by 3½ inches. In sales letters, adaptation to the reader occasionally demands variation from these standard requirements. Letters, for instance, making a special appeal to women may be written on note-size stationery of the highest grade.

Letterheads.—The printed letterhead is not a display advertisement. Simplicity, even in sales letters, should be the keynote. The letterhead contains the name of the firm, its address, a condensed notation of the nature of its business, and, if useful, its telephone number. This material should be printed in black or black and red. Other colors, suitable enough for advertising purposes, should not ordinarily appear in the letterhead. The letterhead properly occupies not more than one-fifth of the sheet. The reason for simplicity is that any attempt at display in the letterhead draws the reader's attention away from the message. Furthermore, never print a dotted line for the date material. The position of the date varies according to the length of the letter.

Essential parts of the letter.—Conventional usage requires six parts in the mechanical make-up of the letter: the heading, inside address, salutation, body, complimentary close, and signature. These constants are well defined as regards contents, arrangement of material within each group, and relative positions of the groups.

The layout containing these essential parts is illustrated in the letter reproduced in this chapter.

1. *The heading.*—The position of the heading is dependent upon the length of the letter. The date should never be less than a double space below the letterhead, and as much lower as necessary for centering a short letter. The end of the date marks the right margin of a well-typed letter. The right margin should be as straight as ingenuity can make it, without resort to frequent syllabication, which is irritating. To bring the end of the heading to the desired margin, count back spaces and mark the position of the carriage. Adjust yourself on the first of each month to the new length of the date material. When paper without a letterhead is used, the address appears in addition to the date. This material

should never be less than an inch from the top and right edge of the sheet. Examples of closed and open punctuation follow:

Closed.]

70 Fifth Avenue,
New York, N. Y.,
March 6, 1924.

Open.]

70 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y.
March 6, 1924

For the correct use of numerals in the heading, see page 90.

2. *The inside address.*—The inside address consists of the name of the firm or person to whom the letter is addressed, the street address, and city and state, arranged, in the block form with open punctuation, as follows:

Mr. James J. Hancock
160 Jamaica Avenue
Houston, Texas

The inside address, typed two spaces below the heading, determines the left margin of the letter.

Observe the following correct forms when addressing:

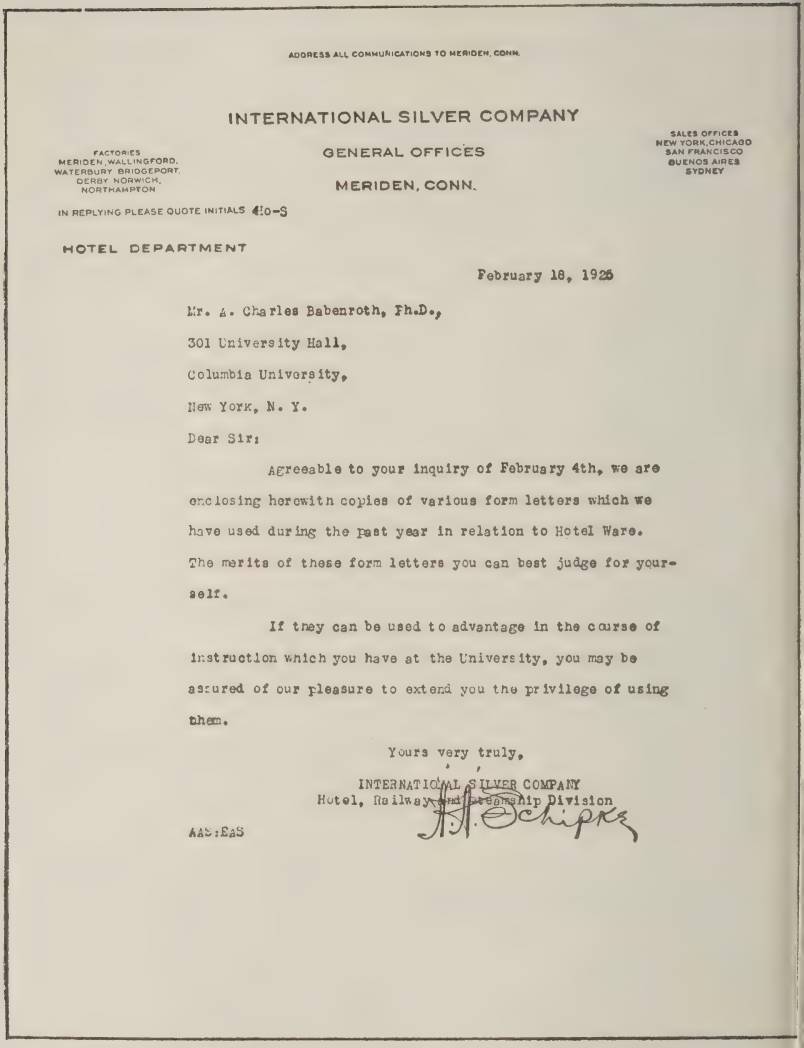
1. *An individual:* Mr., Mrs., Miss.
2. *A firm: Messrs.* (for men, or for men and women); *Mmes.* (for women).
3. *A corporation:* The United States Steel Corporation.

Messrs. is proper: (1) when addressing a partnership of two or more men, or men and women; (2) when addressing a corporation the name of which indicates individuals. Never prefix *Messrs.* when a corporation uses a trade name.

To bring the letter (to a firm or corporation) to the attention of an individual of the firm or corporation, use the following form on the same line as the salutation, and at least a quadruple space from the end of the salutation:

Prentice-Hall, Inc.,
70 Fifth Avenue,
New York, N. Y.
Gentlemen: Attention of Mr. W. J. Goedeke

It is discourteous to abbreviate *Doctor, Reverend, Professor,* if the last name only is used. *Hon.* for *Honorable,*



ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO MERIDEN, CONN.

INTERNATIONAL SILVER COMPANY

GENERAL OFFICES

MERIDEN, CONN.

FACTORIES
MERIDEN, WALLINGFORD,
WATERBURY, BRIDGEPORT,
DERBY, NORWICH,
NORTHAMPTON

SALES OFFICES
NEW YORK, CHICAGO
SAN FRANCISCO
BUENOS AIRES
SYDNEY

IN REPLYING PLEASE QUOTE INITIALS 410-S

HOTEL DEPARTMENT

February 18, 1925

Mr. A. Charles Babenroth, Ph.D.,
301 University Hall,
Columbia University,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

Agreeable to your inquiry of February 4th, we are enclosing herewith copies of various form letters which we have used during the past year in relation to Hotel Ware. The merits of these form letters you can best judge for yourself.

If they can be used to advantage in the course of instruction which you have at the University, you may be assured of our pleasure to extend you the privilege of using them.

Yours very truly,

INTERNATIONAL SILVER COMPANY
Hotel, Railway and Steamship Division

AAS:EaS

Style Study III.—Double spacing gives this letter an open, clean appearance.

when addressing persons holding high governmental positions, is conventionally correct. *Reverend* is properly used in the following combinations: *Reverend* William Waite, *The Reverend* William Waite, *The Reverend Mr.* Waite.

Correct: Professor Clark. Professor Donald Clark. Prof. Donald Clark.

Do not abbreviate titles of persons holding positions, such as *Manager, Superintendent, Treasurer, President, Secretary, Sales Manager.* These titles usually follow the name, which is preceded by *Mr.*

Mr. James Burns, Secretary,
The Washable Fabrics Company,
Burtonville, Ohio.

Note the following special forms:

The President (of the U. S.); His Excellency the Governor; The Honorable Theodore Burton; His Honor the Mayor; The Most Reverend Archbishop Daniel Benson; The Right Reverend Albert Manning, Bishop of New York.

3. *The salutation.*—The salutation is typed two spaces below the inside address and flush with the left margin. A colon follows the salutation (in the best practice without a dash after the colon).

The following forms are correct for ordinary business correspondence:

1. *Most formal:* My dear Sir, My dear Madam.
2. *Formal:* Dear Sir, Dear Madam.
3. *Semi-business:* Dear Mr. Brown, Dear Mrs. Brown, Dear Miss Brown. (These forms imply personal acquaintance, and should be used with care. A long-established business may use these forms in letters to old customers.)
4. *Plural forms (when addressing a firm or corporation):* Gentlemen, Mesdames. (Never use *Messrs.* as a salutation.)

Dear Sirs is going out of use.

In addressing a firm composed of men and women, use *Gentlemen.*

Special forms in the salutation.—Special forms in the salutation are used when addressing the following persons:

A. Sir (editor) Sir (governor) Sir (President) Dear Mr. Mayor Dear Senator (or more formally Sir). *Sir* is correct in a letter to the president of a college or university.

B. Members of the Roman catholic hierarchy:

1. *Cardinal.* Inside address: His Eminence, Patrick Cardinal Hayes, Archbishop of New York. Salutation: Your Eminence.

2. *Archbishop.* Inside address: Most Reverend Michael J. Curley, D.D., Archbishop of Baltimore. Salutation: Your Grace, or Most Reverend and dear Archbishop.

3. *Bishop.* Inside address: Right Reverend Edmund F. Gibbons, D.D., Bishop of Albany. Salutation: My Lord Bishop or Right Reverend dear Bishop.

4. *Priest.* Inside address: Reverend Thomas J. Smith, with D.D., Ph.D., or whatever title he may have. Salutation: Reverend dear Father or Dear Father Smith.

5. *Monk.* Inside address: Reverend Father Augustine, O.F.M. In this instance the surname is sometimes used and sometimes not. The O.F.M. represents the name of the order to which the priest belongs. Monks are usually priests. Salutation: Reverend dear Father or Dear Father Augustine. Those monks who are not priests are usually called Brothers. Inside address: Brother Thomas, followed by the initials of the community to which he belongs. Salutation: Dear Brother.

6. *Sisters.* The Sisters are usually addressed as follows: Sister M. Vincentia. In some instances the name is followed by the initials indicating the community of which she is a member. Salutation: Reverend dear Sister or Dear Sister Vincentia. The salutation in a letter to the superior of the community is: Reverend Mother Vincentia or Reverend dear Mother or Reverend Sister Servant.

4. *The body of the letter.*—The *body* of the letter contains the message. It begins two spaces below the salutation. If no paragraph indentation is used, the first line begins flush with the left margin. Otherwise it begins under the colon after *Dear Sir, Dear Madam, Gentlemen,* and *Mesdames.* The beginning of every succeeding paragraph corresponds to that of the first.

In the block arrangement of material (that is, the arrangement where the first line is flush with the left margin, beginning with the inside address material), the lines should be single-spaced, with double spacing between paragraphs.

When additional sheets are necessary, use blank paper, and place the name or initials of the person to whom the letter is addressed, the date, and the page number, at least one inch from the top and left edge of the sheet. The first letter of this filing material determines the left margin of the second sheet. Leave four spaces between this material and the first line of the message.

FORM 5287

Willys-Overland, Inc.
Automobiles
New York City

GENERAL OFFICES AND RETAIL SALESROOM
BROADWAY AT 50TH ST.
TELEPHONE CIRCLE 8400

SERVICE STATION
521-31 WEST 57TH ST
TELEPHONE CIRCLE 8200

SERVICE STATION
NEW PHONE
COLUMBUS 3001

December 9
1 9 2 4

Mr.D.Hurwitz,
911 Whitlook Av.,
N.Y.City.

Dear Sir:

It would be a great thing for us to service the cars of all our owners in New York - a wonderful thing.

But it is a much greater thing to deserve it - to do business in such a way that our owners would come to us because Willys-Overland, Inc. cares for their interests.

To give VALUES and render such SERVICE that we will always keep a customer, is our constant aim.

This is done by placing your interests above everything else - by serving you so perfectly that you will be permanently satisfied to bring your car here.

Won't you come in, and give us a chance to prove our service?

Cordially yours,

WILLYS-OVERLAND, Inc.

Service Manager.

Style Study IV.—Block form throughout. Uniform left margin.

Example: Mr. J. J. R., Nov. 15, 1923, p. 2.
Never abbreviate the date.

Wrong: 11 / 8 / 25.

5. *The complimentary close.*—The complimentary close, like the salutation, is a conventional form. Although no literal

interpretation is placed upon it (except in *Respectfully yours*), the complimentary phrase, as its name indicates, pleasingly closes the letter. Observe the same degree of formality as in the salutation. Use *Yours truly* with *My dear Sir* (*Madam*) and *Gentlemen* (*Mesdames*). Use *Very truly yours* with *Dear Sir* (*Madam*) and *Gentlemen* (*Mesdames*). Use *Sincerely yours, Very sincerely yours, Yours most sincerely* with *Dear Mr.* (*Mrs., Miss*) *Brown.* Use *Respectfully yours* and *Very respectfully yours* when writing to a high official (in business or government) or when special respect is intended, but never use these phrases as mere substitutes for the other colorless forms. Special forms, like *Yours for more business,* should not be used except in sales letters, and there sparingly.

The position of the *complimentary close* is two spaces below the last line of the body, and, to balance the inside address material, with its center slightly to the right of the center of the body.

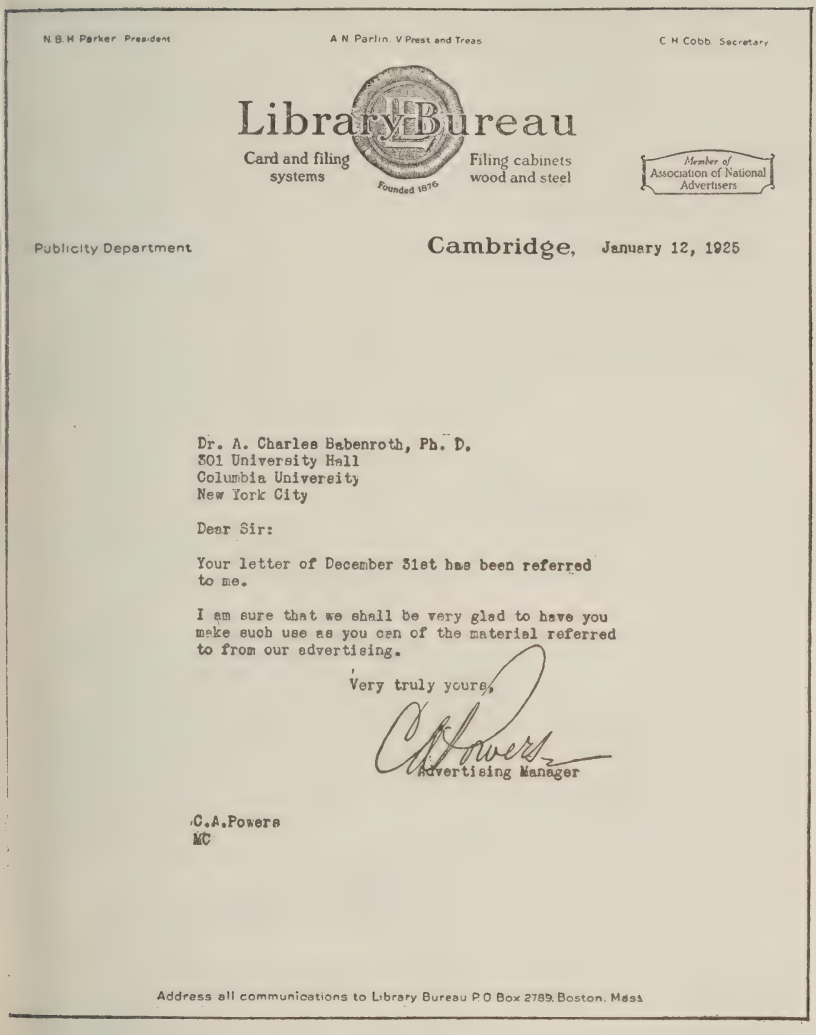
Because the body and the complimentary close are distinct units, they should not be merged. The body is weakened when the last sentence shades into the complimentary close. Therefore avoid the weak ending: *Hoping to hear from you, we remain, Yours truly.* This phrasing is illogical because it blurs two separate units; wordy, because the words *we remain* convey no meaning; ineffective, because words like *hoping, believing,* and *thanking* are always weak. Close the letter with a strong, direct statement.

Weak: Believing that you will find this music roll superior to all others, we remain, Yours truly,

Good: We believe that you will find this music roll superior to all others. Yours truly,

Only the first word of the complimentary close is capitalized. A comma follows the last word.

6. *The signature.*—The *signature* is symmetrically arranged under the complimentary close. As names of firms and individuals vary in length, experiment is necessary to determine the most pleasing arrangement. Because the signature, which should be in ink, is often illegible, the transcriber should quadruple space below the complimentary close and



N. B. H. Parker, President A. N. Parlin, V. Prest. and Treas. C. H. Cobb, Secretary

Library Bureau

Card and filing systems

Filing cabinets wood and steel

Founded 1876

Member of Association of National Advertisers

Publicity Department

Cambridge, January 12, 1925

Dr. A. Charles Babenroth, Ph. D.
301 University Hall
Columbia University
New York City

Dear Sir:

Your letter of December 31st has been referred to me.

I am sure that we shall be very glad to have you make such use as you can of the material referred to from our advertising.

Very truly yours,

C. A. Powers

Advertising Manager

C.A.Powers
MC

Address all communications to Library Bureau P.O. Box 2789, Boston, Mass.

Style Study V.—A short letter with open punctuation.
Block arrangement. Note the position of the typed signature. Perfectly balanced.

hen type the signature. The pen signature appears between he complimentary close and the typed name.

In letters from firms, the firm name is typewritten a double space under the complimentary close. The word *by* does not precede the pen signature if an official signs his name, because his title (President, Secretary, Cashier, and so forth) is

typed four spaces below the firm name. The pen signature appears between the firm name and the title.

It is a good rule never to sign initials alone with the surname. Sign one given name in full, with or without additional initials.

The signature should be so arranged as to indicate responsibility for the letter. If the name of the company appears first, the company is responsible. If the name of an individual appears first, the individual is responsible.

Company responsibility:

The Collapsible Tube Company
A. W. Neidlinger (*Signature*)
A. W. Neidlinger (*Typed*)
President

Personal responsibility:

A. W. Neidlinger (*Signature*)
A. W. Neidlinger (*Typed*)
President
The Collapsible Tube Company

When the person is writing in his official capacity, his title should be on the same line as the signature. (Sometimes, but not with equal force, it precedes the name of the company on the line below.)

A. W. Neidlinger (*Signature*)
A. W. Neidlinger, President (*Typed*)

R. C. Pearson (*Signature*)
R. C. Pearson, Sales Manager (*Typed*)

An unmarried woman signs her full name preceded by *Miss* in parentheses. A married woman signs her name (*Janet Waters*), and below it in parentheses her husband's name preceded by *Mrs.* (*Mrs. Charles A. Waters*). A widow signs herself as *Mrs. Janet Waters.*

Never use a rubber stamp with the legend, *Dictated but not read.* Such devices are impolite, show haste, and imply lack of consideration. A letter bearing such a stamp creates an unfavorable impression that good letter plan and correct form cannot counteract.

7. *Additional material.*—The initials of the dictator and the transcriber are placed one space below the signature and flush with the left margin.

A statement of inclosures should appear in the body, and such a statement is sufficient. If further notation is desired for quick reference, one of the following forms may be used one space below the initials and flush with the left margin:

One inclosure; incl; Two inclosures; 2 incls.

Folding the letter sheet. —If the letter sheet is properly folded and inserted in the envelope, it will not be extracted and unfolded with its head down before an irritated reader. Observe the following directions:

1. Place the letter sheet flat on the desk.
2. Fold up from the bottom to within one eighth or one quarter of an inch from the top of the sheet. This brings the crease slightly below the middle of the sheet.
3. Fold from right to left slightly less than one third the width of the sheet.
4. Fold from left to right so as to bring the left edge flush with the crease on the right.
5. With the envelope face down, and the flap toward the letter, insert the letter so that the fold from left to right (4) is against the back of the envelope and the open part at the top of the envelope. This procedure assures (*a*) that inclosures will not remain in the envelope when the folded letter is withdrawn, and (*b*) that the sheet will unfold so as to confront the reader top side up.

Exercises in the Layout of the Letter.

Use white, unruled paper. If possible, typewrite your work. If these exercises are used for blackboard work in the classroom, each student should mark off a space to represent the letter sheet, arranging the material as for a typewritten letter.

1. Arrange the following data in their correct order and position on the letter sheet. Correct any errors you find, and supply omissions where necessary.

(*a*) Atwater Kent Mfg. Co., 4703 Wisahickon Ave., Phil., Penn., Dear sirs, very sincerely yours, John S. Howe, 353 Houston St., Annabel, Miss.

(*b*) Stromberg Motor Devices Co., Dear Gentlemen, 62 East 25th Street, Chicago, Ill., Yours Truly, Bert Jones, 282 10th Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisc.

(*c*) Phil. R. Bankert, Sales Mgr., Colt's Fire Arms Co., 917 Divi. St., Salt Lake City, Utah, Dear Mr. Benkert, Respfly yrs., Jas. Brown, 419 8th St., San Francisco, Calif.

(*d*) Rev. Jas. Prouty, D.D., 56 7 Avenue, Seattle, Wash., Rev. Dear Sir, yours truly, John Black.

(*e*) Dr. John Reed, president, Murdock College, Murdock, La., Honoured Sir, Yrs. Respfly, Ernest Williams.

(*f*) Mr. Walter Pitt, Esq., Ramsden, N. J., my dear sir, Very sincerely yours, John Blatt.

(*g*) D. Appleton & Co., 35 West 32nd Street, N. Y. City, Dear Sirs.

(*h*) Mr. Archer Holland, cof Hartley Food Co., Baltimore, My., 589 Washington Avenue, Gentlemen.

(*i*) John Black and sons, Ft. Atkinson, Wis, Dear Sir.

(*j*) Professor Ashley Eaton, Ph.D., Buffalo University, Buffalo, N. Y., Dear sir.

(k) Mr. Maxwell Brown, ♯1078 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D. Col., My dear Sir, Respectfully y'r's, William Makepiece.

(*l*) Loughry and Wilson, Mnfrs., Men's Clothing, 683 2nd Ave., Chicago, Dear Messrs.

(*m*) Misses Fonde and Boubert, womens' gowns, 95 West 57th Street, New York, Dear Misses.

(*n*) Write two correct forms of this signature, one to show responsibility of the firm, the other individual responsibility: Very truly yours, Mr. John M. Hornsby, President, Hornsby Oats Company.

2. Write appropriate titles, salutations, and complimentary closes for the following inside addresses:

(*a*) John F. Hylan, Mayor, New York, N. Y.

(*b*) James Courboin, Judge, Circuit Court, Albany, N. Y.

(*c*) Max Northwell (physician), 14 Utah Place, Brattleboro, Vt.

(*d*) Donald L. Clark (Professor, Doctor of Philosophy), Columbia University in the City of New York.

(*e*) Collapsible Tube Company, A. W. Neidlinger, President, New Brunswick, N. J.

(*f*) Standard Oil Company of New York, 4 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

(*g*) Morton T. Tyndale (bishop), D.D., 40 Park Drive, Chicago, Ill.

(*h*) A. W. Johnston (Senator), Capitol, Washington, D. C.

(*i*) A. R. Pulliam, Editor, Georgia Watchman, Atlanta, Georgia.

3. Write correct and forceful forms of the following closes:

(*a*) Hoping that this adjustment will meet with your approval, we are Sincerely yours.

(*b*) In the hope that you will send in your contribution at once, we remain Very sincerely yours.

(*c*) Assuring you that we are offering the best investment in the automotive world, we beg to remain Cordially yours.

(*d*) Knowing that you cannot afford to do without this article at such a low cost, we are Yours truly.

(*e*) With sincere good wishes for your welfare, we assure you that we are Sincerely yours,

(*f*) Thanking you for your kindest attention to this matter, Respectfully yours.

(*g*) Assuring you that it will be a pleasure to serve you, we are Yours truly.

(*h*) Thanking you for giving the above your attention, we are Most respectfully yours.

(*i*) Anticipating the pleasure of serving you and thanking you for your inquiry, We are, Very respectfully yours.

(*j*) Thanking you for your patronage which is much appreciated we are, Yours very truly.

4. The following closes are correct. Explain why.

Very truly yours,
Harmon Judson (Signed)
Harmon Judson (Typed)
President,
The Parsons Feed Company

Very truly yours,
Harmon Judson, President
The Parsons Feed Company

Very truly yours,
The National Fruit Company
Walter Ferris (Signed)
President

Very truly yours,
The National Fruit Company
By Walter Ferris

Part II

THE BUSINESS LETTER

Chapter VI

THE SALES LETTER

Success in business is justified by quality products and genuine service. The legitimate reward of such success is profit. In these days of national and local advertising, a measurable part of the responsibility for assuring profits is carried by sales copy. It is, therefore, not accidental that sales writing represents the most advanced form of business writing. It is, furthermore, not the result of chance that the sales letter, a form of sales writing, is the most highly developed type of business letter.

The close relation between the sales letter and the fundamental needs of business has become fully recognized. Modern correspondents are convinced that the selling point of view dominates all forms of business letter activities. Correspondents in the order department, as well as in the credit, collection, and adjustment departments are, in the modern sense, qualified to write resultful letters in proportion to their knowledge of the sales viewpoint. Because every business letter is considered a selling letter, an understanding of the fundamental principles governing the sales letter is indispensable.

Sales letter not an advertisement.—Sales letters and advertisements are alike in aim: to evoke favorable responses in the form of direct sales or good will. There is, however, a fundamental difference in method and approach. Advertisements, designed to reach masses of men, are broadcast where they can be read by everybody, in newspapers, magazines, street cars, and on billboards. The advertisement, moreover, must compete with other advertisements for the attention of the reader. The sales letter is sent to a specific address for the perusal of the individual addressed.

The following advertising circular, for example, was sent to university instructors in English. It was multigraphed on a letter sheet, but without the inside address, salutation, and

complimentary close. It will be observed also that the contents and language of the message lack adaptation to the special needs of teachers. The text is not designed solely with the object of arousing desire and conviction in the class addressed. Important also is the fact that the *Reference Guide to Spenser* must compete with the *Syllabus* for attention. A letter concentrating on one or the other of these items and written with an individual or distinctly class appeal, would make a stronger impression.

The Syllabus of American Literature by William T. Hastings presents in brief, convenient form the essential facts in the history of American literature, with critical judgments of the chief authors and their more significant works.

Probably no modern poet offers a greater variety of perplexing literary problems than does Spenser, and the number of them is swelled by deliberate use of a sort of camouflage and self-protective coloration on the part of the poet and his friends. *A Reference Guide to Edmund Spenser* by Frederic I. Carpenter aims in some measure to indicate, record, classify, and codify most of these important topics and problems of Spenser criticism, solved and unsolved, the materials of which have been accumulating for some three centuries. The *Reference Guide* is a starting-point for study of Spenser's career, writings, and literary history.

The mere fact of printing such an advertisement on letter paper and sending it through the mails does not make it a sales letter. The reason is that language, form, and general make-up differ according to whether you aim to reach masses or individuals. Thus the letter gains power in proportion to the writer's success in making it personal.

The reader should feel that the letter not only was sent to him but also was written for him. The material is selected with his desires and needs as guides, and the tone, language, and length are adapted to his habits and tastes. It is obvious that few sales letters are individually composed and typed. They are usually sent out in mailings of at least one thousand. Nevertheless, it is also obvious that the writer needs to know the traits of individuals he plans to reach. The more individuals of that class he has met personally, the better able he is to appeal to them in their characteristic modes of thought and expression. Thus a letter selling equipment to physicians

differs in tone and language from one mailed to farmers. A letter selling electrical household appliances to women demands a different approach from one selling apparatus to electrical engineers. These are broad but real distinctions. Much the same material may be used in letters to different types of individuals, but for each group the material is selected according to the needs of that group.

Such adaptation is illustrated in the following letter. It concentrates on the Spenser book, and makes a special appeal to teachers of English in colleges and universities.

Professor U. R. Uptodate,
Modern University,
Culturetown, Indiana.

Dear Sir:

You have long felt a real need for a trustworthy guide to the study of Spenser.

Although there are many brilliant essays on various aspects of Spenser's genius and his contribution to English poetry, no one book that authoritatively assembles the large body of critical opinion has heretofore been available to teachers and students.

Probably no poet offers a greater variety of perplexing literary problems than does Spenser. The number of these is swelled by deliberate use of a sort of camouflage and self-protective coloration on the part of the poet and his friends.

"A Reference Guide to Edmund Spenser" by Frederic I. Carpenter aims in some measure to indicate, record, classify, and codify most of these important problems of Spenser criticism, solved and unsolved, the materials of which have been accumulating for some three centuries.

"A Reference Guide to Edmund Spenser" is the starting point for study of Spenser's career, writings, and literary history.

This invaluable contribution to scholarship in the field of English literature is an indispensable part of the library of your institution. It should be a part of your library, whether or not you are now teaching Spenser, because his influence is felt in all later English poetry.

The price of this volume brings it within the reach of every instructor in English.

The inclosed stamped card is for your convenience in ordering. Observe that you may have the GUIDE sent on approval if you make use of this card within ten days.

Sincerely yours,

It is important, furthermore, that the letter appear to be what it is, a personal communication. The producing power of an otherwise good sales appeal is reduced if stationery, letterhead, and black and white spaces have not been adjusted to make the letter seem personal. The reader loses interest the moment he suspects he is not reading a personal message.

The letter page can be personalized so that each reader feels he is the individual addressed. The "fill-in" must, and can, match the body perfectly. The signature should appear personal. The added expense of these items is more than offset by increased sales resulting from the stronger attention value of the individual appeal.

The glamour of the sales letter.—There are good reasons for the high esteem in which the sales letter is held. The sales department is the key department around which are grouped the auxiliary departments of credit, service, collection, and adjustment. Letters written in these departments are auxiliary to sales letters. Sales letters successfully initiate transactions carried on and completed satisfactorily in other departments.

The Advantages of the Sales Letter.

Range of uses.—The sales letter has a wide range of uses. It profitably markets products varying in price from five dollars and less, to five thousand dollars and higher. By means of it the local barber or laundryman swells his list of customers. Mail-order houses sell an enormous variety of goods to hundreds of thousands of customers. A nationally known concern selling a high-priced product indispensable to merchants has sent out more than one hundred thousand sales letters in a single mailing. This magic messenger can sell equally well a two-dollar book or a high-priced farm tractor. It can also sell valuable expert advice to a restricted list of high-salaried executives.

Low cost.—The low cost of the sales letter as compared with that of personal salesmanship is another important item. The saving in time, traveling expenses, and hotel bills is striking. Whereas the expenses of the road salesman total ten per cent at least, salesmanship by letter reduces the cost of selling to three per cent or less.

The letter unfailingly reaches the customer. The government stamp is a passport to the inner office. If the recipient is "not in," the message can wait without added cost. Unlike the personal salesman, it does not retrace steps or omit the call when the prospect is "not in."

Pioneer work.—Pioneer work is effectively done by the sales letter. It prepares the way for the salesman. Often the customer must be educated to the point where he realizes his need for the product. Even in the sale of high-priced instruments and machines, the letter can effectively do this pioneer work. Manufacturers of farm tractors show letters in which salesmanship on paper not only has educated the prospect but also has made the sale without the aid of personal salesmen.

The Uses of the Sales Letter.

Selling direct by mail.—(1) The manufacturer of a radio loudspeaker sells direct to the *consumer*. The whole transaction is completed by letter. (2) When the expense of personal selling to small or remotely situated dealers is excessive in proportion to the expected profit, letters are used to make the sale. (3) When the salesman has failed to meet a dealer, letters are used. (4) Direct by mail methods are utilized to sell products on consignment, like electric light bulbs and garden seeds.

Persuading customers to come to the merchant's store.—(1) A local milliner or clothier shows consumers how they can best satisfy their seasonal needs at his store. He sends one letter adapted to the needs of former customers, and another to reach local prospects listed, for example, in the telephone directory. This type of letter prepares the way for the sale, which is completed at the store. (2) An electric flatiron is nationally advertised by a manufacturer who does not sell direct to consumers. Inquiries resulting from such advertising are answered in such a way as to induce the prospect to visit the local dealer, who completes the sale at his store. (Note: In place of writing the inquirer alone, the manufacturer often notifies the nearest dealer, who follows up with a sales letter adapted to the situation.)

Educating the prospect.—It is not the primary purpose of this type of letter to make the sale. (1) The manufacturer of a cream separator or milking machine explains his machine and service in a series of letters designed to arouse the desire of the dairy farmer for the product. (2) A tire manufacturer aims to convince a capable dealer of the advantages of carrying a complete line of sizes and styles, and to persuade him to take over the local service agency. A series of letters familiarizes the dealer with the groundwork of the plan, in preparation for the visit of a factory sales representative who makes the sale.

The sales letter, then, aims to accomplish one or the other of two purposes: (1) to make the sale; (2) to prepare the way for the sale.

The student must remember that order-taking is not selling. When a customer comes into a store with the object of buying a Lionel electric train for his child, all the clerk does is to find out how much the customer wishes to spend. The clerk does not *sell* the Lionel train. He does not induce the customer to buy it. He merely takes the order. The customer entered the store *sold* on the Lionel electric outfit. Salesmanship involves two additional steps: arousing desire, and convincing the prospect that your product satisfies his needs and desires.

The function of selling in place of order-taking is illustrated in the following letter. It is designed to do pioneer work. Far from attempting to close a sale and to take an order, its aim is to begin to educate the prospect to the realization of his need for the "Book of Knowledge." The immediate object is to secure the prospect's permission to send a book of specimen pages from the twenty volumes of the "Book of Knowledge."

Analysis reveals that the free offer is merely bait to arouse interest to the point where the reader will ask for the specimen book. The ultimate object is to sell this reader on the "Book of Knowledge."

True salesmanship is revealed in that the letter initiates an action by persuading the reader to accept the complimentary book. This book, in turn, supported by succeeding letters, is designed to sell him on a set of books for which he had not previously recognized a need.

Dear Sir:

If there are children of school age in your family, they will enjoy and appreciate the wonderfully interesting free book that we shall be glad to send you by mail without cost.

This free book will appeal to every boy and girl. It is made up of articles from the BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE, with a wealth of interesting pictures, some of them in color.

We shall mail this book, absolutely free of charge, and without obligation on your part, if there are children in your family. The inclosed card is stamped for your convenience in replying. (If there are no children in your family, may we ask that you turn this letter and card over to a friend who may be interested?)

Dr. John H. Finley, formerly Commissioner of Education of the State of New York, says of the BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE: "Suppose a boy of ten were to spend fifteen minutes a day reading these pages . . . he would at thirteen know more about the earth and life on it than the wisest men knew a few generations ago."

The BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE is well worth the most serious consideration of every parent because it concerns the most important problem of today—the education of the children.

Children will enjoy and appreciate the free specimen-page book. Send the stamped card, and the book will be mailed at once with our compliments.

Yours truly,

The Structure of the Sales Letter.

A complete sales letter incorporates the essential elements of the sales appeal. Analysis of thousands of successful sales letters reveals no deviation from the principle that action is produced most effectively by observance of the following four steps:

1. The beginning: establishing contact.
2. The second step: creating desire.
3. The third step: convincing the reader.
4. The ending: stimulating action.

These headings, together with the order in which they appear, are based on sound psychology and wide experience. Experimentation with the structure of sales letters over a period of many years has proved the soundness of this outline. It stands as a safe guide for all writers of sales letters.

One word of caution, however, is necessary. It is desirable for clearness in discussion to separate the headings of the sales approach. Such separation, clear-cut and definite, is seldom found in practice. It is true that no sales letter incorporating a complete sales appeal can hope to be successful without these headings. Yet the seasoned writer knows very well that it is difficult to draw a sharp line of demarcation between the several headings, and to say that creating desire stops just here, and convincing the reader begins precisely there. In practice the headings shade into one another. If they did not, the letter would be lacking in smooth flow of thought. The student, then, must not make the mistake of thinking of these headings as though each were a clearly defined unit, like a drawer in a bureau. Such separation is unavoidable in the following pages, however, if each function is to be studied and illustrated to advantage. The best sales letters, nevertheless, do not show such a clearly marked separation.

The beginning: establishing contact.—The purpose of the first sentence is to win the reader's attention. Upon its power to interest him depends his willingness to read. Whether he reads or tosses the letter into the wastebasket unread is determined by the success with which the opening sentence establishes contact through an appeal to his needs, self-interest, and desires. If the opening is so compelling as to incline him to read farther, his mind is clear for the reception of the sales message.

The attention-getter, as the first sentence is called, must be *brief, attractive,* and *appropriate.* Since a long paragraph is heavy and uninviting, the first paragraph should always be short. Compactness and simplicity are indispensable qualities. The material can be made attractive if it is presented specifically, concretely, and from the point of view of the person addressed. The opening sentence must be interesting in itself, and at the same time it must tie up directly with the message it introduces.

Weak beginnings.—Tested for the essential qualities stated in the foregoing paragraphs, the following types of opening sentences are uninteresting. The alert writer never uses them.

1. Avoid *timorous openings* couched in the language of trade announcements. The language lacks vitality. It is most often hackneyed. The point of view is too much that of the seller. The following openings are weak:

We take pleasure in announcing that . . .

It gives us great pleasure to inform you that. . .

You will be interested to know that we are . . .

We beg to inform you that . . .

Being convinced that you are a progressive dealer, we are offering you . . .

I am offering something in which I think you will be interested.

I suppose you are aware that I have opened a Men's Shop right here in our own town.

2. Avoid *negative openings,* such as apologies and unpleasant or painful suggestions. Apologies are never in place. Unpleasant suggestions put the reader in a mood opposite to the one intended. Thus a letter selling multigraphing service to a business man should not begin with the statement that most reproduced letters are failures. Such a statement is striking enough as a stimulus to attention. Its negative emphasis, however, is fatally strong. It arouses suspicion. Such a handicap cannot be overcome by any amount of skillful persuasion. The original impression cannot be erased, and doubt as to the usefulness of this type of letter remains in the reader's mind. The following openings are fatally negative:

All mechanical equipment is subject to occasional troubles and disorders, but we assure you that all ordinary troubles have been reduced to a minimum in the Mertoun Mechanical Dishwasher.

Although we know you are a busy business man, we are taking the liberty of writing you concerning . . .

Our new service plan for dealers surely deserves a minute of your valuable time.

Pardon our intrusion upon your crowded hours, but we have something so good to offer that you will be willing to give a minute of your precious time.

Federal Judge Anderson in Boston said the other day: "There are no greater idiots in the world than the investing public."

Negative suggestion is perhaps legitimate and successful in letters selling tornado or fire insurance. Even here the appeal is painful, and therefore to that extent repelling.

The appeal to fear has been used repeatedly in promoting the sale of Weed tire chains. The well-known attention-getter *Skid-Shocked* is accompanied by the picture of a woman in a state of collapse at the steering wheel. This appeal is more effective in an advertisement than in a personal letter.

The following paragraph, from an advertisement published by The Parent Association, is designed to stimulate inquiries about "New Methods of Child Training."

The shrill scream of a child. The screech of hurriedly applied brakes against skidding wheels. Too late! A crumpled form is carried in tender arms to a waiting mother. "Driver not to blame," the coroner's jury says.

3. Avoid *irrelevant openings* because, however interesting, they do not tie up with the sales message. The reader resents being tricked into attention. Such a letter, even if read, has little chance of being read sympathetically because the trick opening awakens suspicion concerning the facts of the message itself.

You would like to make ten thousand dollars in one month, wouldn't you?

We cannot guarantee that amount, but in December you can make as much of that amount as your radio trade warrants, if you stock up on our latest improved Wave Capture radio set, selling for $60 complete.

Observe the bulldog when he is invited into a scrap. He merely growls a word of thanks, and then reaches for his favorite hold.

No fight in which he takes part is a draw.

There is, of course, no real resemblance between a bulldog who thinks with his lower jaw, so to speak, and an intelligent business man, but . . .

4. *Vague openings* never interest the reader. Colorless generalizations give him nothing substantial to think about. The more definite and specific the opening sentence is made, the more effective it will be. Contrast the following examples:

Vague: Recently one of our cars climbed a steep grade near San Francisco, easily lowering the record held by a car of another make.

Specific: On October 5, a new 10-C Sedan with three occupants climbed Mount Diablo near San Francisco—an elevation of 3000 feet in 12 miles—in the remarkable time of 25 minutes 17 seconds, exceeding by one minute 28 seconds the best previous record, held by a car recently heralded as a sensational hill-climber.

Good beginnings.—Among the many possible good openings, the following types have been found successful.

1. Timely *news items* have attention value. Closely related is the timely reference to seasonal activities. Seasonal appeals are almost certain of attention. Holidays offer opportune points of contact.

At no time of the year does the home and its needs get so much attention as in the months immediately following the elections. (Urging dealers to stock goods.)

At this time of year, executives in the automotive industry are formulating their plans for 1926.

Judge Gary, in an interview published on February 16, said: "The next six months will witness a general improvement in business."

The following quotations from recent published statements by heads of giant corporations prove that the back of old man Hard Times has been broken. (Urging dealers to stock.)

You have been waiting for January—the month for thrifty buyers. Our store is in full readiness to hurry winter merchandise out, in order to make room for new spring goods.

2. The statement of a *significant fact,* which must meet the requirements of buyers, establishes contact readily. Such a fact is chosen with full consideration of the "you attitude."

We are sending you, under separate cover, gratis, samples of Shuman's Adjustable Shelf Clamps and Gummed Price Stickers.

The signature on this letter has been produced by a "Wet Ink" method.

As one who believes in better homes and in civic improvement, you will enjoy reading "Better Homes and Gardens."

3. Material like the foregoing is often effectively brought forward in the form of a *question.* The question, however, both in material and phrasing, must reveal understanding of the reader's needs. The writer, furthermore, must be certain that the question applies to the reader's needs and that it

will be answered in the affirmative. Many druggists, for example, would answer the following question in the negative, with the result that the opening falls flat: "Your customers have been clamoring for the Whizz Hot Bottle, haven't they?" The following openings are good:

Have you ever had some friend in the Dress business take you around to a manufacturer's, and let you pick the exact model you wanted, at the wholesale price? (Concerning gowns, in a letter to women. Desire is aroused even if the prospect has never had the experience.)

How would you edit a magazine? (To former subscribers.)

Have you read this about President Butler? (Interests college men in a series of articles on university affairs.)

Do you realize the satisfaction to be derived from the use of an enclosed porch?

Would you pass up a chance to save a whole year's interest on four $1,000 five per cent securities?

Can you afford to take a chance with your baby? (Stork nursery scales.)

Would you fight an armed mob with bare fists? (Helping a dealer to meet competition with modern methods.)

What are you doing to protect your child's skin? (Face soap.)

Do animals obey the ten commandments better than men and women? (A set of books on animal life.)

4. The *if* opening is effective. When the *conditional opening* states the cause, interest is aroused to ascertain the effect of the cause. When the effect is presented, the reader is tempted to complete the sentence to discover the cause. The conditional opening appeals to the universal instinct of curiosity. It is therefore certain of attention when correctly phrased.

If you want perfect radio reception in your home, remember—Lafayette.

Whether your product is sold through distributor, jobber, or dealer trade channels, the man who actually sells your goods is the man who comes into final contact with the ultimate purchaser.

If clothes could talk—"We want Fels-Naphtha," they would shout in chorus.

5. The *split opening* is also effective as an appeal to curiosity. Short opening paragraphs have greatest attention value. When, therefore, the opening sentence is long, it should be so constructed as to permit a "split." A "split" opening is one in which the sentence is begun in the first paragraph and completed in the second paragraph. This device has the added advantage of getting the reader beyond the first paragraph. Once he is beyond the first paragraph, he will probably continue to read. The Baltimore *Sun,* for example, sets out to prove the value of an efficient "exclusive agency" system of newspaper distribution to Baltimore homes. This newspaper publishes morning, evening, and Sunday editions.

There may be room for debate as to the value of exclusive agencies in some fields—

But time has demonstrated the value of concentration of effort in the distribution of Sunpapers.

6. A vivid or witty *anecdote* always grips the reader's attention. All the world loves a good story well told. In the sales letter, it must be brief and appropriate. Well-placed humor not only puts the reader in a responsive mood but also illuminates the sales message. To accomplish these highly desirable results, the story must be pat; that is, it must be directly applicable to the sales message.

Dear Sir:

Once upon a time, it was customary, before offering refreshment to a guest, for the host first to taste the food or sip the drink. He inspired confidence—"If I am safe, you need not fear."

Now, when a salesman approaches a customer with something new to sell (new, at least to the customer), he must find a tangible token of confidence, too, for he meets the question, "Who uses this? I should like to know what results someone near by has had with it."

And here you are.

Thousands of folk have used Kelvinator Electric Refrigeration in their homes for years. They have found it to be the ideal way to keep food pure and fresh and to have ice available for table use at all times.

Here is a list of Kelvinator owners right in your own vicinity. Call them up or write them. We are confident that they will be glad to endorse Kelvinator.

Ask any Kelvinator owner, and you'll learn why you ought to install Kelvinator Refrigeration.

Kelvinator comes in various sizes and styles ready to be installed in any square ice box with front doors.

If you fill out the inclosed card, we'll gladly send you full particulars about this great electric refrigeration invention. You will see Kelvinator in operation if you will call at our showroom.

Very sincerely yours,

At the sound of the janitor's broom, each microbe on your floors mounts his flying steed (a particle of dust) and goes on a rampage through your premises. (Use Dustdown for sweeping.)

You remember how a famous artist was asked how he mixed his colors—and the reply, "With brains, sir." (How Maxwell House Coffee is blended.)

7. The *you attitude* is prevailingly used in the foregoing good openings. Whether the pronoun *you* is expressed or not, the vital opening takes the point of view of the reader. It is an established rule that a good letter proceeds from *you* at the opening to *we* at the close; that is, the reader's interests dominate the opening, the writer's interests may dominate the close, but not baldly. It is certain that the *I* and *we* openings kill interest. The opening may contain a generous sprinkling of *you's* and *your's* and yet be conceived from the point of view of the writer. Such a statement as, "If there is any way in which I can serve you in fitting out your home, I shall be more than pleased to do so," fails to arouse attention, not alone because the statement is vague, but chiefly because it stresses the writer's interests.

The second step: creating desire.—Attention is now capitalized by awakening interest in the product. Interest is focused on the individualizing features or qualities of the product. In the brief space of a single letter, the writer cannot present the whole sales story. He therefore concentrates on the appeal that meets a known need or desire. It may even be necessary to awaken a sense of need or desire. In either case, he chooses the selling point that differentiates his product from others in the same competitive class.

The problem is to find the talking point. The Kelvinator

letter on page 161 concentrates on testimonials and references to establish conviction. The writer entirely ignores creation of desire, assuming, rightly, that his prospects are "sold" on the Kelvinator, but that they hesitate because they fear this desirable invention has not stood the test of actual use long enough to warrant purchase by householders.

Usually, however, the sales letter creates desire before attempting to establish conviction. The prospect must be "sold." He must be shown that he needs or desires the product. There are several ways of creating desire.

1. *External description.*—Desire is most effectively created by placing the product or article in an attractive light. This is often accomplished by means of description. It is, however, a mistake to rely exclusively on external description. By means of words alone it is difficult, and in the final analysis impossible, to create a complete and convincing picture of the physical qualities of the article. Words cannot produce the effect properly secured with lines, colors, and perspective. Not only limitations of space, but also the impossibility of producing an adequate impression of physical presence by direct description of external details, indicate the ineffectiveness of exhaustive literal description (word pictures). An attempt to describe size, shape, color, materials, and operation is seldom successful in stimulating desire. An example of external description follows:

Remember, you get four volumes, each volume 8½ inches high, 6 inches wide, and 1 inch thick, printed from the original plates on a specially imported English wove paper, beautifully and substantially bound.

Description of appearance and construction, if used at all in the letter, must be brief and suggestive. Illustrated folders and booklets, in the form of inclosures, complete and strengthen the impression upon which the letter concentrates. Inclosures properly do the detailed work of external description. This procedure is well illustrated in a letter calling attention to the sea outings offered by the United Fruit Company. Observe how the awakened interest of the reader is guided to the inclosed leaflets supplementing the descriptive headings of the letter.

It is appropriate to mention that our steamers are especially constructed for Caribbean travel. All cabins are *outside,* large, cool, and provided

with fans, and so forth. The spacious decks, lounges, music and smoking rooms afford all the desired comforts for ocean travel. We carry only First Class passengers, and the meals are included. The steamer goes to the dock at all ports, and is your hotel there en route to destination. You thereby avoid hotel expenses ashore, and the real inconveniences of having the ship anchored out in the bay.

I am inclosing two special leaflets for your careful attention which cover the many trips ranging from nine to twenty days' duration. . . . Your particular attention is invited to the weather statistics tabulated in the Sea Outings folder. There is practically no variation between the winter and summer temperatures in the Caribbean. The highest temperature recorded at the Panama Canal Zone . . .

2. *Emotional description.*—Emotional description is most effective when the letter alone does the work, without the assistance of inclosures. Words and phrases are chosen and assembled to make the reader visualize the product in terms of the satisfaction its possession will afford him. A suggestive concrete appeal to one or more of the five senses is more telling than paragraphs of statistical or other matter-of-fact description. External description may reach the head but not the heart of the prospect. Desire is an emotion. To stimulate desire, the appeal should, whenever possible, stir the emotions. The appeal to the emotions is not the only way of creating desire; but it is effective—always with luxuries, and most frequently with necessaries.

If, for example, the letter is to sell a heat regulator, the prospect will register desire if the regulator is described in terms of the convenience and comfort it affords. The reason for the superiority of emotional description is that the prospect is not buying copper wire, dry cell batteries, a brass thermometer, chains, together with the cog wheels and pulleys constituting the mechanism. He is, instead, buying the service this patented combination of metal products assures him. He can be interested to the extent of desiring the heat regulator if the letter suggests vividly the comforts (1) of a warm bathroom early in the morning, (2) the saving of steps and worry for the wife during the day, and (3) rooms of even temperature for the children or guests. Such an emotional appeal realizes the service of the automatic heat regulator in terms of actual experience. In the same way a letter selling books does not go into details concerning binding, paper stock,

and typography. Instead, in the most effective approach, it emphasizes the pleasure the books afford in terms of exciting adventure or restful thought.

Such appeals to the senses are mainly directed to the instincts of human beings. These instincts are inborn cravings demanding constantly to be satisfied. Analysis of successful advertisements reveals that copy writers address themselves most frequently to strong instincts like the following: imitation, parental love, pride, play, comfort, convenience, cleanliness, and acquisitiveness.

A grand piano is sold by the appeal to *imitation* when the value of the instrument is enhanced in the eyes of the purchaser by the fact that a favorite soprano at the opera uses it exclusively. Many people seem to find a toilet soap desirable because a popular actress uses it exclusively.

The appeal to *pride* in attractive appearance is employed in the sale of face lotions, clothes, and reducing systems. Pride of ownership and imitation dominate the following letter paragraph:

> Northland skis are used by perhaps 90 per cent of the best skiers, and by practically 100 per cent of the expert ski jumpers. During recent years all the world's records have been made on Northland skis.

Mountain and seashore resorts, toy shops, and sporting goods establishments create desire by arousing the *play* instinct.

Electric washers, toasters, sweepers, and other mechanical devices for the home and office are sold through the appeal to *comfort* and *convenience*. Thus, for example, in selling the electric ice machine for the home, the appeal is to convenience:

> The Kelvin-et can be set in place like any article of furniture. The only connection required is "plugging in," as you would an electric iron. . . . The Kelvin-et operates automatically, requires no attention, and relieves you of all the worry and trouble of ice delivery.

The universal instinct of *cleanliness* has abolished the sugar barrel, vinegar barrel, molasses barrel. Food is sold in packages and tins because they keep food sanitary. Bread is kneaded, baked, and wrapped by machinery.

The dealer's desire to increase his profits is based on the instinct of *acquisitiveness*. Stocks, industrial bonds, and mort-

gage bonds are likewise sold to the man who desires to increase his income. Sometimes this instinct is so strong as to cloud a man's judgment, and he succumbs to the temptation of "investing" in gold mines with prospects as fair as the blue sky of a perfect summer's day.

Language of the emotional appeal.—Restraint is necessary in the choice of words if the emotional effect is to be successful. Direct-by-mail sales language must be toned down to the quiet home surroundings in which the letter is read. As Richard Surrey has phrased it, "Shrinking violet stuff will generally be found more effective than the volcanic kind." Nothing is gained nowadays with "copy that singes the hair." Young writers betray their inexperience by piling up adjectives. One well-chosen word is more effective and response-producing than a whole string of lightly chosen adjectives. Attention should be given to verbs. A well-chosen verb gives life to otherwise dead copy. Vivid verbs make vital copy. The following questions, asked by the Ayer Advertising Agency, are to the point.

Juice-laden sweetness—fragrant as orange-blossoms—would these sell you this particular orange?

A green-gold globe bursting with exhilarating tartness—would that tempt you to try this grapefruit?

Crisp as frost, ruddy-cheeked, without blemish—would that entice you to ask for this particular apple?

And so the housewife, after reading Blue Goose advertising, goes to market with a picture of the unusual goodness of Blue Goose produce in her mind. Vivid copy reduces the retail distributor's work to the simple process of taking and delivering orders.

To visualize products in tempting words requires a "nicety in words."

Imaginative language creates desire.—Description employed to arouse desire must always be brief. The language must be specific, concrete, and suggestive. Where vague expressions and general terms make no impression, image-making words stimulate the imagination into activity that arouses latent desires.

Simple figures of speech—similes and metaphors—vivify and vitalize the message. They make the description lively

and colorful. Thus the Baltimore *Sun* advertisement states that "Everything in Baltimore revolves around the *Sun*."

The following description arouses desire because the ice-cream freezer is placed where the housewife can see it in her kitchen cabinet. Observe also the appeal to comfort and cleanliness.

With its lustrous, lasting enameled surface in a cheerful, light tone, and its vivid deep blue label, the Acme Freezer makes a most attractive addition to the modern kitchen equipment. The Acme is sanitary, and easy to clean.

Ketchup copy arouses desire by a vivid sense appeal, pleasantly assisted by sentimental recollection, which is also an emotional experience.

Can't you recall old-time "Ketchup Day"? Remember how the luscious, red-ripe tomatoes were gathered early in the morning in the old home-garden? The glistening dew was still on them.

From the kitchen was wafted the fragrance of secret spicing and seasoning, as the tomatoes were cooked just long enough, just lightly enough, on the back of the stove.

Wheatena has a "distinctive nutty flavor." Martha Washington shoes mark the "difference between harsh, abusive shoes, and gentle, supporting, easy shoes."

Observe how every word is alive with suggestion in the paragraph interesting drivers in tire chains:

With rain pattering down on the car roof—a narrow road, wet, slippery, and treacherous; uncertain traction; a steep grade behind you, a dangerous curve ahead, and a car just coming around the turn—then you hope the other fellow has good sense too—that he is safeguarding his own life and yours by using Weed Chains.

Or again, one vivid word impresses the whole message on the mind:

The insistent memory of the helpless slithering towards a danger point.

The sprightly, picturesque language of the following excerpt awakens the reader's curiosity to know more about the sixteen-year-old girl author. The lively tone of the paragraph is suggestive of the spirit of youth.

When most of us were learning to read, Mollie Panter-Downes was writing her first story. Right now she is amazing England with her first novel, "The Shoreless Sea." The careful London critics are hailing little Mollie as a genius while her hair is still in curls. The November *Cosmopolitan* gives you her first story for an American magazine. Another love story. And it's as tender and exciting as youth's first kiss.

The appeal to the imagination is strong in the following sales paragraphs because every one of the specific picture-making words and phrases adds a concrete touch that awakens desire.

Every tourist hopes some time to see the Wonder City of America: the famous sky line of the world's tallest buildings; Wall Street, the steel-and-concrete canyon of finance; the Great White Way that comes gayly to life after dark. . . .

Whether you enter through the water gate from the west, the Boston Post Road from the north, or by the Sunrise Trail from Long Island, you will find the roads dotted with stations where careful motorists are buying Texaco Motor Oil by name, and identifying it by the clean, clear, golden color.

Emotional description is well handled in the following desire-arousing paragraph, which gives the reader something tangible to visualize.

As you sit before your Silver Voice Loudspeaker in your living room at home, you have but to close your eyes to visualize the famous artists who are generously broadcasting for your pleasure. Clear, pure, vital strains come through Silver Voice, the loudspeaker with the natural tone. You are carried away with the exact and perfect reproduction of the timbre of the voice and the quality of the instrument to which you are listening.

The third step: convincing the reader.—Emotions are seldom sustained, but are, rather, momentary in duration. Hence, because it is fleeting, desire must be converted quickly into conviction. If not, the reader's glowing vision of the product fades as his ardor cools. Most often, therefore, the appeal to desire shades into the appeal to conviction.

By means of judgment and tact, the writer senses the climax of the appeal to desire. He realizes that the point of departure has been reached when the prospect's desire for possession is strongest.

It is necessary now to convince the reader that the product meets his needs and desires. Evidence must substantiate the glowing picture. You must now prove that your statements concerning quality and service—and price—are true and that the reader can make no mistake in purchasing your article.

An effective method of securing conviction is to set up a standard, and then proceed to show how your product excels when measured by this standard. This method is employed by the Ware Radio Corporation:

You need not fear that startling new developments will make your Ware out of date over night. In the finer sets the basic principles of radio reception have been scientifically tested, developed, and applied. You can purchase a Ware today and be sure that it will give you years and years of pleasure and satisfaction.

If you are marketing a new kind of tooth brush in a new way, you may interest your reader by the appeal to cleanliness.

Frankly, don't you prefer to know that your tooth brush is positively clean and sanitary? Most tooth brushes are exposed to dirt and thumbing by thoughtless people. Even those sold in cartons have to be taken out and exposed to handling so the purchaser can see what he buys.

The new Owens Stapletied Tooth Brush is sold in a sparkling, clean, sanitary glass container. You can see what you buy, without running the risk of getting a soiled or germ-laden brush. The container is heavy enough to resist breakage. It makes a wonderfully convenient traveling case.

Although you have stimulated your reader to the point where he wishes to own one of your sanitary tooth brushes, he is nevertheless registering reservations. These mental obstacles need to be removed.

He may fear, for example, that your new brush is inferior in design, or in construction. It may not clean teeth as thoroughly as the brush he has been using. It may not be as sturdily built, so that the bristles come out irritatingly. Or he may fear that the cost of the brush is excessive because of the glass container. Such obstacles stand in the way of satisfying him. You have aroused his desire, but he is not convinced. To secure conviction, you must remove these objections.

Money cannot buy a better tooth brush. The trim design is one voted on by hundreds of dentists as the best for cleaning every part of the teeth. Notice how wide apart the bristles are—the wedge-shaped tops and the trim that fits the shape of your teeth. You'll like the curved handle too. It makes cleaning the back teeth so much easier. The Owens Tooth Brush, sold in this better way, doesn't cost you a cent more than ordinary brushes. The reason is tremendous production, and also the fact that we produce our own glass containers at minimum cost.

Kinds of evidence.—To secure conviction, five kinds of evidence have been found useful in sales writings.

1. Substantiated facts may be used in the form of statistics (figures and tabulated data) or statements incorporating verifiable facts concerning materials and processes of manufacture.
2. Testimonials in the form of letters from satisfied users may be used.
3. References are helpful, in the form of names of individuals and firms using the product or service.
4. Trial use may be offered by placing the product in the home for a stated period.
5. Samples may be sent gratis or at a nominal cost.
6. Tests are convincing. The test may be made in the factory or in a laboratory. The procedure and results are explained in the letter. Or, a sample may be sent to the prospect with directions for making the test himself.
7. Guaranties may be made in the form of definite agreements assuring good appearance, durability, and efficiency.

The foregoing types of evidence need to be explained, illustrated, and applied.

1. *Substantiated facts,* to be convincing, must be definite and verifiable. What is equally important, statistics and statements must be presented in a form adapted to the understanding of the reader. He is not as a rule capable of analyzing statistics. Certainly he has not been trained to interpret them. Statistics are usually technical, and as such dry and unattractive, so that most readers are repelled by them. They can, however, be adapted to the comprehension of the untechnical mind by a process of simplification and visualization. Pictorial devices stimulate interest and clarify understanding where tabulated statistics confuse and repel.

Instead, therefore, of relying on bald facts and figures

to establish conviction, the writer should humanize his material in concrete statements. These need not lose accuracy because of the added human interest. Thus, for example, tabulated data proving the efficiency of Pierce Arrow trucks are less illuminating than the same data presented in the story of an owner's experience with his truck. Such data can be made interesting in a simple narrative of the actual experiences of an individual owner who has subjected the truck to unusually severe tests of operation. The reader can visualize the data as part of the story, and can therefore understand their application and appreciate their significance.

If you are trying to show advertisers how your newspaper is superior to others in reaching the largest consumer market in a certain territory, you do not convince by bringing forward elaborate statistics, exhaustively presented, in the form in which they are on file in your office. Simplification is necessary for easy comprehension. It is readily seen that thousands of figures and scores of tabulations lie behind convincing paragraphs as easy to comprehend as the following:

1. In the hundred mile radius around Chicago there are 32 cities that have a population of 10,000 or more. In 23 of these 32 important cities the *Sunday Chicago Herald and Examiner* leads in circulation.

In these 32 flourishing cities there are 187,316 families. And among these 187,316 families, an average of 117,279 *Herald and Examiners* are distributed every Sunday.

2. Yes! Gary is growing—and faster than even the livest space buyers realize.

New tube mills, $23,000,000; new churches, $1,000,000; gain in building permits, $2,000,000; 12 miles more of street railway; 82% gain in registration; 12% gain in school pupils—$40,000,000 annual payroll.

3. It is among the teachers in these town and rural schools that "Normal Instructor-Primary Plans" has more than 80% of its 160,000 circulation.

4. There are sales opportunities in Oklahoma. Oklahoma's $432,000,000 crop value gives the farmers of the state a $150,000,000 increase above 1924. They are enjoying the greatest individual prosperity since 1920.

The quality of raw materials and the processes of manufacture often have a direct bearing on durability and long-con-

tinued satisfactory service, as in the case of trucks, tractors, and automobile tires. The purchaser is reassured by proof of unusual care in selection of materials and in supervision of processes. The writer takes the reader behind the scenes and into the workshop, saying to him, in effect, that there is nothing to conceal. In this connection it should be remembered that the effective letter must concentrate on a single selling point.

By pursuing this method, the Timken roller-bearing makers have associated their product in the public mind with extreme exactness of measurements—"to the fraction of a millimeter" —insisted upon at the factory. Miller Tires are thought of in connection with the Miller high standard for training workmen, who are individually responsible for quality production. Such selling points are equally convincing when applied to food products. The consumer is confident that he is eating genuine cream tomato soup if he is told about the quality and quantity of shipments of cream from dairy farms to the food factory.

In the justified belief that truth in advertising means honesty in manufacture, the prospect is convinced by appeals that frankly lay the facts before him. This method of securing conviction is exemplified in these two Beech-Nut paragraphs:

The red oval of Beech-Nut is an honorable coat-of-arms which has been borne in the forefront of many a battle for purity and high standards in food products.

If smoking Beech-Nut Bacon a little longer will improve that bacon, Beech-Nut will do it. If broken peanuts roast more quickly and give peanut butter a burnt taste, Beech-Nut will throw out all broken peanuts. And so it goes with spaghetti, pork-and-beans, catsup, jellies, candies, and gum.

Experienced writers know the difficulties in the way of featuring price. When the selling point is based exclusively on the lower-than-average or greatly reduced price, the reasons for the reduction must be convincingly stated. A low price in itself is not a strong inducement to buy. If no reason for the radical reduction in price is given, the prospect doubts the quality of the article.

Ten days before Christmas, for example, an enterprising

manufacturer of a six-tube radio set, priced at one hundred and fifty dollars, announced that he would sell this set for sixty dollars. He described the set fully and supplied an illustration, but he failed to state why he could sell at a saving of more than half the established price. Naturally, the anticipated rush of buyers did not materialize. Curiosity was aroused, but conviction was not established.

Each prospect in his own way conjured up negative reasons for so low a price. The material must be inferior. The workmanship cannot be reliable. How do we know that the standard price is one hundred and fifty dollars? What assurance is there that the parts are not odd lots assembled to sell at the lower price? These and similar questionings rise in the buyer's mind and make him skeptical.

The seller must meet such sales objections. Specific assurance must be given that quality of materials and workmanship is guaranteed to equal that of the most approved sets sold by dealers. References to satisfied users are indispensable for establishing the validity of such statements. Because price has been featured, the manufacturer must explain definitely how he saves the buyer more than half the original price. He might, for instance, state that he sells direct to the consumer, thus eliminating profits taken by distributors and dealers. He sells for cash only. Such points should not be merely mentioned: they need to be developed and stressed.

The following letter is convincing because the seller fully states his reasons for the low competitive price.

Dear Sir:

If we offered you one hundred dollars a month, would you accept it? Besides saving you that much money monthly, the following offer simplifies the buying and cutting of your trimmings.

To make pockets for the normal monthly output of one thousand dozen suits requires one thousand ninety-one yards of "Indian Head" or "Fruit of the Loom" muslin, the price of either of which is eighteen cents a yard. The thousand dozen pockets cost you—not including the cost of laying out and cutting—one hundred ninety-six dollars thirty-eight cents.

We can supply you with seven by eight, the standard pocket, at ten cents a dozen, or one hundred dollars for the thousand dozen—a genuine saving to you of about one hundred dollars a month.

In addition to this saving, you have the benefit of another service. In order to get the advantageous price of eighteen cents a yard on the muslin, you have to buy at least a case of it. From us you can buy just as much as you need. Our large stock and quick delivery enable you to receive your goods just a few hours after the order reaches us.

The pockets are neatly wrapped in packages of fifty dozen, each of which contains ten folds of five dozen. This arrangement enables you to give your contractor just the amount he needs. Our cutting machine not only insures neat and clean cutting, but also makes the pockets perfect in size and shape.

You cannot afford to neglect this opportunity. The more quickly you act, the sooner your saving begins.

We shall gladly send you a fifty-dozen package on approval if you mail the inclosed card immediately.

Yours truly,

2. The *testimonial* has been shunned for more than a generation because of its questionable use in patent medicine advertisements. It is, however, rapidly gaining favor and seems, in fact, to be establishing itself among discriminating advertisers. The testimonial, properly used, is one of the most powerful aids of the sales writer. The favorable testimony of a known user is convincing evidence of the reliability of the seller's statements.

The testimonial is valuable in proportion to the difficulty of securing permission to use it. The influential citizen who writes a spontanteous testimonial in appreciation of the beauty, comfort, and service built into his favorite sedan will usually be found to shrink from the publicity connected with the use of his signature in an advertisement or sales letter. A testimonial must, of course, never be used without the consent of the writer.

When, however, a good letter is available, the writer has at his disposal an invaluable aid to conviction. Thus *Vogue* quotes the testimonial of a prominent satisfied user to strengthen its statement that *Vogue* carries more women's hosiery advertising than any other magazine.

"Onyx" Hosiery was first advertised in *Vogue* in 1900. Since 1916, "Onyx" advertising has averaged more than twelve pages a year in *Vogue*. For fifteen years we have used nothing but full-page space in your magazine.

What stronger evidence can we give you of the high regard we have for *Vogue?*

"Onyx" Hosiery, Inc.,
R. K. Leavitt, Adv. Mgr.

Unless it is brief, the testimonial is hardly available for quotation in letters. Ordinarily it must be reproduced, in facsimile, if possible, in the inclosure. A testimonial has greatest value when it appears to be unsolicited.

3. *References* to satisfied clients or customers are closely related to testimonials. They are effective, for example, when a manufacturer has completed the installation of modern heating or generating equipment in large stores or tower buildings. Or again, an advertising agency announces, "What we've done for others we can do for you." This generalization is followed by a list of clients, introduced by the statement, "If you want to know about our work, watch the advertising of the following."

References are especially convincing when the list of clients is impressive, not for its length alone, but also for its quality. Limitations of space in both advertisements and letters confine the use of testimonials to compact statements from one or two individuals, whereas a list of clients can be extended to eight or ten names. In sales letters, therefore, where considerations of space influence the choice of material in so many ways, references to satisfied users are often preferred.

Suppose, for example, that factory walls and ceilings in five different industries have been covered with good results through the application of "barreled sunlight." By use of the names of these five clients, a representative list of references is made possible even in a short letter, whereas a single testimonial, however well chosen, represents the point of view of one manufacturer only.

The problem is to determine whether the one or two brief testimonials at the disposal of the writer carry more weight, because of their individuality and personal tone, than the extended list of names proving wide distribution of the product. Quality is weighed against quantity. If the list has obvious quality as well as quantity, references are to be preferred. The Kelvinator letter on page 161 is accompanied by testimonials and references, both printed on the inside pages of the folded letter sheet.

References are most impressive when arranged in tabulated form. Attention value is stronger if the items are displayed through the use of indentations deeper than those of other units in the letter. Careful thought should be given to the layout of the paragraph containing references.

Bad: If you want to know about our work, watch the advertising of the following: Bon Ami, Congoleum Rugs, Valspar Varnish, Grinnell Sprinklers, Wellsworth Products, McCutcheon Linens, Tavannes Watches, Peter Schuyler Cigars, Converse Rubber Shoes, Ansco Cameras and Films, Columbia Window Shades, Tarvia, Duz, Wallace Silver, Havoline Oil, The Dictaphone, Barrett Roofings. . . .

Better:

Bon Ami
Congoleum Rugs
Valspar Varnish
Grinnell Sprinklers
Wellsworth Products
Tavannes Watches
Converse Rubber Shoes
Ansco Cameras and Films
Tarvia
Duz
Havoline Oil

4. *Trial use* is one of the most convincing forms of evidence. (1) A genuine offer of free trial over a stated period convinces the reader that you have faith in your product. (2) Your offer removes all possible hesitation by eliminating doubt about whether the product can fully meet the prospect's desires and needs. He feels that he cannot lose anything, because he need not commit himself to the purchase until he has tried the product and found it satisfactory. (3) A free trial offer satisfies a fundamental human craving for evidence supplied directly by the senses. Because of its importance in the psychology of the sales appeal, this last point needs further explanation.

However complete the evidence presented in the text of the letter, certain inhibitions may nevertheless cause the reader to doubt your typed evidence. Although testimonials and references may show that others have found the product reliable, he would like to make trial himself. Either the precepts he has learned at home and in school, or the contacts he has established for himself, have taught him that experience

is the most reliable teacher. Poor human nature relies, at least in the practical matters of life, largely on the testimony of the senses. However real, therefore, the letter is in its appeal to the imagination, the reader may nevertheless register the age-old instinctive desire expressed in the words, "Show me," which is the common way of saying "Give me tangible proof." Personal experience is, as it always has been, a most reassuring form of evidence.

The sales letter is often employed to market products lending themselves readily to the establishment of conviction through direct appeal to the senses. Any doubt that may exist in the mind of the reader can be removed by a statement offering trial use.

Publishers of books have found that a ten-day free trial compels conviction. In the sale of electric washers, cream separators, and similar products, conviction can be clinched by allowing free use of the washer, for instance, over a period of two weeks or a month. The letter arouses interest to the point where the prospect is willing to give the washer a trial. The trial completes the process of conviction. The principle is the same as that underlying the sale of automobiles. If the prospect can be induced to give the car a trial by driving it or riding in it, the demonstration supplies the last link in the chain of evidence. Two of the best known higher-priced automobiles, the Franklin and the Packard, make trial use an established part of their process of convincing the prospect, the effort in both cases being directed to persuading the prospect to drive the car himself. This method supplies direct evidence through actual experience.

The following closing paragraphs of a sales letter are designed to persuade the prospect to ride in the latest model of Franklin car:

The Franklin owner, with this latest car, will have something which is not obtainable in any other automobile. He will have all those qualities of comfort, reliability, easy handling, safety, and economy, which have been Franklin superiorities for years.

Now they are coupled with high power.

You may think you have appreciated Franklin qualities before, but when you drive the new model you will readjust your entire idea of Franklin performance.

Tell your dealer when it will be convenient for you to drive the car.

Yours very truly,
The Franklin Automobile Company
S. E. Ackerman
Sales Manager

Samples and tests, although in reality forms of trial use, are treated separately for clearness.

5. The *sample* method of convincing is now used with a large variety of products. It has always been a natural auxiliary of toilet preparations, such as soaps, tooth paste, perfume, hair tonics, shaving cream, and facial cream. An analysis of sales literature reveals that samples assist also in sales of textiles, paper, paint, razor blades, paper towels, food products (coffee, Postum, breakfast foods), and milk chocolate. Even outside the range of small articles, the offer of samples, free or at nominal cost, has been used to clinch conviction. Trial packages are used by manufacturers of wall plaster, enamel, paint, and varnish. Miniature specimens of Beaver Board show the composition and appearance of the board. Swatches attached to sales letters provide tangible evidence of the quality of leather used in the shoes the letter aims to sell.

The psychology underlying the sample method demands quick action on the part of the manufacturer. The effect of the sample is strong in proportion to the promptness of its arrival. If it is tardy, the interest of the inquirer wanes. Delay dampens interest. To perform the function assigned to it in the sales campaign, the sample must arrive while the prospect's interest is still fresh. A printed folder or sheet of instructions should always accompany the sample.

6. *Tests* are of two kinds. (1) The manufacturer subjects his product to severe laboratory or road tests. (2) The consumer is asked to make the test himself.

To convince housekeepers and laundrymen, the soap manufacturer subjects woolen goods, or dainty fabrics, to severe tests. Manufacturers of vacuum cleaners conduct experiments to prove that their sweepers do not injure oriental rugs. Carefully supervised speed and endurance tests are well known from their employment in the automotive and tire industries.

The methods employed in such tests, together with the results achieved, are fully and accurately explained. This material is best presented by means of illustrated inclosures.

Unprejudiced outside experts are often engaged to conduct elaborate experiments involving competitive products. A professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in this way tested the durability of hotel linens in a series of severe laundry tests. Not long ago a professor in the same institution reported on his investigations concerning the harmfulness of coffee. His report was widely advertised by coffee associations. The Franklin Automobile Company has for many years had authoritative reports from a professor of standing at Yale University, who tests the air-cooled motor by the standards of scientific research. Reports from experts of unquestioned standing indicate that the test is genuine. The prospect has faith in the experimenter and the experiment.

There are several well-known instances of having the prospect make the test himself. Paper manufacturers send samples of their various grades of paper. The recipient is asked to tear off a strip from the paper he is now using, and then to tear a strip from the sample. He can thus assure himself of the superiority of the seller's paper. A distributor of tooth paste sends litmus paper so that the recipient can easily determine whether he has acid mouth, which the specific tooth paste eliminates.

Perhaps the most widely advertised test is that of Valspar. The user is told that he can pour boiling water on the Valsparred dining table without injury to the finish. A picture always accompanies the explanation of the test. A man is pouring boiling water from a teakettle onto the dining table while his wife looks on.

Vague statements are never convincing. Even generalizations, always useful when followed by specific statements, are colorless when they stand alone. The following generalization is not persuasive:

> Our latest model of open car climbs steep hills faster than any other car in its price class.

In concrete form this statement carries conviction:

> The Jewel touring car, Model 10 G, on Saturday, October 15, 1924, in competition with four other touring cars, each of a different make

(the names of which will be supplied by any Jewel dealer) and under the supervision of men well known in the automobile industry (whose names will be supplied on request), from a standing start climbed the Fort Washington Avenue Hill in New York City two seconds faster than the nearest competing touring car.

7. *Guaranties* offer legitimate means of establishing confidence. Conviction is strengthened by the seller's guaranty of the purity, durability, and efficiency of the product. Mail-order houses base their selling appeal flatly on satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Wherever used, the guaranty is reassuring. It makes the reader feel he is not taking a risk. The confidence of the maker in his product convinces prospects that they can make no mistake in placing their orders. The Goodyear Rubber Company, for example, gives a flat guaranty that the Wingfoot rubber heel will outwear any other rubber heel: a new one free if it does not.

The language of the guaranty should show restraint. Extravagant statements arouse suspicion. It is, of course, obvious that the buyer can have little confidence in the guaranty if the standing of the firm making the guaranty is not known and respected.

Visualized evidence.—Abstract ideas phrased in colorless statements lack vitality. They do not suggest pictures. Colorless abstractions are never convincing because they cannot stir the life-giving imagination. To make an impression, the writer must visualize his message and vividly bring it forward in graphic form. He must use concrete statements capable of bringing a picture to the mind's eye.

One effective way is to dramatize the message. In the following concrete example, the appeal to the imagination is unmistakable. The writer visualizes the situation. The material is presented in direct discourse, which makes the evidence personal and, therefore, vital. The language is not striking, but the images are clear and convincing. The reader can picture the action and scenery. The abstract example, on the other hand, offers nothing tangible on which to base images.

Abstract:

Dear Sir:

Successful men of affairs own and drive the Ford. They do so because they use judgment in making investments.

When they buy an automobile, they look upon the purchase as an investment. They apply the same tests they are accustomed to use in other more important financial transactions.

It is surprising to know that a very large percentage of American bankers use the Ford. Most bankers have made their money through carefully considered investments. They know that the Ford offers more value dollar for dollar than any other car.

They realize also that the initial investment in a Ford is small. They are farsighted enough to know that the resale value at the end of one year is greater in proportion than in any other car they could buy.

Yours truly,

Concrete:

Dear Sir:

At a meeting of bankers at the Missouri Athletic Club in St. Louis, there was only one bank president who did not own a Ford car.

He asked the others, "Why do you men ride around in Ford cars when you can afford the best?"

One answer was, "I made my money through good investments and careful management, and there is more value dollar for dollar in a Ford than in any other car made."

Another answer was, "My investment in the first place is very small. I can afford to let my car stand on the street exposed to the weather, can park it in a small space, and at the end of the year trade it in and get greater value in proportion than with any other car I ever owned."

We offer you the best investment in the automotive world. Our show rooms are attractively arranged for your comfort. You are under no obligation to buy.

Come in and see us.

Sincerely yours,
The Englewood Auto Company
per M. A. Masters

Reference to inclosures.—References to inclosures in the form of booklets, catalogues, folders, and the like, must be made with care and forethought. The tie-up between the letter and the inclosure is not properly established by means of the trite *as per inclosure,* or the mechanical *as in the inclosed folder.* Neither is the vague *See the inclosed booklet* sufficient. Such references are ineffective because they assume that the reader is already interested in the inclosure.

S. D. WARREN COMPANY

Manufacturers of Warren's Standard Printing Papers

101 Milk Street, Boston, Mass.

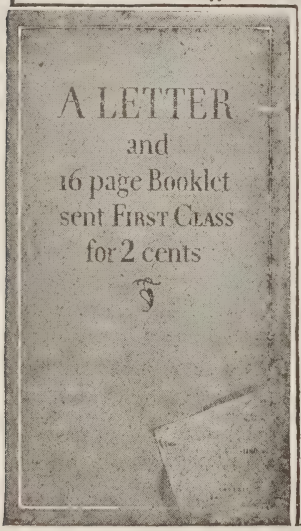
November 12, 1924.

Mr. Stuart M. Stanley,
Oral Hygiene,
Flatiron Building,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Stanley:

Back again at our desk, after the highly inspiring Pittsburgh Convention of the D.M.A.A., we are immediately checking up on requests for advertising material and samples.

Your name appears requesting copies of -- Illustrated Letters. These are being sent to you by parcel post today. May they serve to indicate a few possibilities for the application of Illustrated Letters as applied to building your own business.



Warren's Standard printing Papers are handled in New York through:

Henry Lindenmeyr & Sons, 32 Bleecker St.
Lasher & Lathrop, Inc., 29 Lafayette St.
Alling & Cory Company, 313 W. 37th. St.

They will be glad to furnish you with blank dummies, sample sheets or any similar service you may desire.

Please feel that we cheerfully welcome this opportunity -- or any opportunity at any time -- to help you further in your direct mail efforts.

Cordially yours,

Elmer S. Lipsett,
Adv. Dept.

Style Study VI.—Inside address in block form.

Indented and blocked paragraphs. Lines single-spaced; paragraphs double-spaced. Integral (patented Dual-use) inclosure. The cover of the booklet is part of the letter sheet. Note indented display of jobbers' names and addresses.

Inclosures are used with the specific object of creating desire or establishing conviction, or both. The material of the inclosure amplifies the necessarily limited explanation of the letter. Whereas the average sales letter contains about

two hundred words, the inclosure may contain not less than one thousand or fifteen hundred words, together with illustrations, diagrams, tables, and other aids to visualization. Even if all or most of this text material could be put into a processed letter of several pages, it would not be attractive. The letter cannot make use of typographical aids such as boldface and lightface type, nor can it utilize the color effects possible in illustrations, borders, and head and tail pieces.

References to inclosures should be vital and stimulating. They must interest the reader in the folder and create a desire to read it. Commonplace references fail to interest, with the result that the inclosure is unread. Reference to inclosures should be made as helpful as possible for the reader. Specific mention, by page or section number, is always desirable. If this plan is followed, skillful phrasing arouses the reader's curiosity. If he is directed to a specific page, he has a definite objective. If the inclosure holds his interest at the vital point indicated, he will more than likely read what precedes and follows.

Vague: Kindly consult the catalogue we are sending you, and you will find what you want. (This is delightfully easy for the writer, but fatally hard for the reader.)

Vivid and stimulating: Skis for your young son are illustrated and described on page 15 of the inclosed booklet. There you will find skis especially designed and made for boys. These skis are made from the best quality of selected quarter-sawed yellow pine. Observe the fine yet durable finish, and the fancy stripes. Children like these stripes. (This reference gives consideration to the specific interest of the reader. He is not put off with the inconsiderate *you will find what you want.*)

This is not the place to discuss the proper way of writing effective booklets, folders, and the like; but from what has been observed in the foregoing paragraphs, it is plain that the inclosure must be so compellingly written as to hold and sustain the reader's interest. The function of the letter reference is to stimulate desire to read the folder. The letters on pages 151, 164, 191, 196, 199, 206 contain effective references to inclosures.

What has been explained with regard to the inclosure as an independent unit, applies also to explanatory matter and illustrations printed in a four-page folder. When such a folder

is used, the letter sheet contains not merely a personal letter but also what is equivalent to advertising matter. Skillful articulation by means of reference is essential here also. The Warren Paper Company advocates this form of inclosure in the way illustrated on page 185.

4. **The effective ending: stimulating action.**—The sales letter attracts attention, creates desire, and establishes conviction for the purpose of stimulating action. The close is thus the most important part of the sales appeal. If the closing statements fail to stimulate action, the reader is not sold. A weak close fails to get the response or the order, according to the purpose of the letter. The writer's painstaking care with the action-getting close is rewarded by the increased number of favorable responses the letter brings in.

At the close of the third step in the sales approach the buying impulse is at the peak. The function of the closing sentences is to guide this buying impulse into action. It is especially important that there should be no break between conviction and action—the circuit of the favorable reaction must not be interrupted. The stimulus to action should grow naturally out of the preceding material.

If the close is to convert desire and conviction into favorable action, the clincher must be definite and positive. It must be phrased so as to overcome the inborn tendency of man to postpone action. Procrastination is the thief of orders. Psychology has revealed the natural tendency of man to hesitate before committing himself to buying. This hesitancy signifies man's instinctive reluctance to part with his money, except on definite assurance of full value received.

The close can be made to clinch the sale in a profitable percentage of the total appeals if the following principles are observed:

1. There must be inducement to immediate action.
2. Action should be made easy.
3. The urge must be positive.
4. The tone of the urge must be adapted to the reader's tastes and temperament.

Offer inducements.—There should be inducements to action. Action can be hastened if the inducement-urge is

Style Study VII.—Four-page illustrated letters—several styles and folds. Integral inclosure.

Regular letterhead and letter on first page. Ample space for pictures and type matter for detailed explanation on the two inside pages. Back page occasionally used for order blank or return coupon. Letters on this page printed on Warren's Silkote and Warren's Cameo.

strongly presented. If you can awaken the reader's fear to delay, you have a powerful incentive to action. Show him that the present offer is limited (1) by setting a date for the close of the selling period; (2) by indicating an increase in price after a specified date; (3) by calling his attention to limited facilities or supply, which will be exhausted before a specified date.

(1) Setting a date for the close of the selling period.—

This offer expires on December 1. If you are not prepared to order at once on the inclosed order blank, send me the inclosed post card and I shall reserve a set for you for ten days. You realize why I am urging you to make an immediate decision.

(2) Indicating an increase in price after a specified date.—

After December 24 these pianos will be sold positively at the standard price of $850. You cannot afford to wait. At the present price of $700 you are saving $150. Buy now.

Yours truly,

(3) Calling attention to limited facilities and supply.—

When 50,000 sets of these great books have been sold at $9.98 a set, our contract requires us to begin paying editors and authors their royalties—then the price of these identical sets will advance to our regular retail price.

Another device for stimulating action is the offer of a premium for a prompt response. Thus, an additional book or a set of books may be offered free on condition that the order is received before a stated date. A glass bookcase is offered if the encyclopedia is ordered within a specified time. A discount from the established price is allowed if the encyclopedia is purchased before a set date.

When this sale began, we had on hand 27,000 sets. We now have less than 7,000 sets left. These are sure to be sold before December 1. Remember, if you order now, you receive the glass bookcase, and the inclosed coupon reduces the price $2. Do not delay to avail yourself of this last opportunity to own this popular edition.

Yours truly,

Make action easy.—The natural inclination to postpone action is strengthened when the letter does not make the response easy. Consideration for the reader's comfort demands (1) that the close of the letter give specific directions; (2) that the action demanded be simplified; and (3) that the amount of effort be reduced to a minimum.

The reader should know precisely what is necessary to complete the order. If a coupon is used, the required items should not only be clearly indicated but also reduced in num-

ber to bare essentials. The less the effort required, the more likely will the reader be to respond. Cumbersome order blanks and coupons should be avoided. Some letters simplify action to the point where nothing more than the reader's signature at the bottom of the letter sheet is required. If the margin of profit warrants, a stamped and addressed envelope is inclosed. Such simplification has great action value because the reader is relieved of considerable effort. It has been observed that no less than seven steps are required if a letter response is necessary. The letter must be dictated or written, but most people do not like to write letters. The letter must be signed and inclosed in an envelope, which must be addressed, sealed, stamped, and mailed. Most of these steps can be saved and the way made easy for a response.

Example of simplification in a letter to busy executives:

Simply sign your name and tell your stenographer to mail the coupon.

Example of a good close when a sample is offered:

Put one ten cent piece and one nickel into the inclosed coin card, fill in your name and address, and mail the card today.

The positive urge.—The positive urge is usually made in one of two forms. It appears as (1) a suggestion, or (2) a direct command.

The positive urge is especially effective where the letter has successfully awakened desire and established conviction. The reason is that it is almost second nature to obey an impulse when a positive request is made to do so. Parents, teachers, employers, and indeed traffic policemen, have made obedience easy for most mortals. The writer of sales letters capitalizes this derived instinct by adapting the command to the tastes and temperament of his prospects. Even prospects who possess culture and intelligence will respond readily if the request is properly keyed. The reader who might take offense at a direct command may yet be moved to favorable action if the phrasing of the positive urge is softened or made strongly suggestive in the form of a question. To determine upon an appropriate form for the closing sentence, carefully study the habits and social level of the readers on the mailing list. For example, women of culture and persons belonging to one of the professional classes respond most readily to the sugges-

tive close, especially when it is good-natured and dignified. The writer of the following half-ironical action getter has shrewdly gauged the type of prospect likely to read a literary magazine like *The Saturday Review,* "Henry Seidel Canby, pilot; Kit Morley, Master of the Bowling Green."

For one brief moment—bless the mark—be efficient, mail the coupon, mail it today—mail it to the right address. The rest is, not silence, but Morley and his fellow seamen. Send this coupon on a voyage of discovery today.

Suggestion in the form of a question: Why not mail the coupon today and let us send you a sample?

Suggestion: We shall be glad to send you a copy of this valuable book, without charge or obligation on your part, if you will sign and mail the inclosed stamped and addressed card.

Polite suggestion: I am inclosing a stamped return card for you to say when I may come—with the understanding of course that my call places you under no obligation.

Command: Step in next time you are near our store.
Please mail the inclosed card today.
Fill out the inclosed order blank and mail it today.

The divided urge.—The purpose of the sales letter is to sell. The letter as a whole is constructed with the aim of persuading the reader to act. To get action, it must close with a positive urge suggesting one specific action. The prospect cannot be moved unless he is confronted by a single, definite urge that completes the series of favorable reactions stimulated by the preceding steps in the sales appeal.

The close, therefore, must never allow the reader choice of two or more actions. To offer a choice is to make him pause. As the time he devotes to the reading of a sales letter is always severely limited, hesitation is fatal to immediate action. The facts are that the reader who is unable to choose between alternative offers will inevitably postpone action, with the result that he never responds because time is the enemy of sales-letter responses. The carefully designed letter leads the reader from the attention-compelling opening sentence to the action-compelling closing sentence that urges one and only one action.

Weak: If you mail the inclosed card, our agent will call; or if you prefer, we shall gladly send you any information you wish. Should you

pass our showrooms at 17 Atlantic Avenue, just step in and examine the Princess Motor Boat at your leisure.

Such an ineffective close is the result of poor letter planning. The writer did not plan so as to focus his material on a significant close. Before he begins to collect his letter data, the writer must know precisely what action he wishes the reader to take. Relevant facts, ideas, and thoughts are then collected and grouped so as to concentrate every effort on persuading the reader to make a single definite response. The foregoing close is weak because the writer has not focused his letter. What was the letter designed to elicit? A request for a catalogue, folder, or advertising material? Permission for a salesman's call? Or did the writer plan to induce the prospect to visit the sales rooms? In a single letter he can hope to realize only one of these objectives. Therefore, his letter should close with *one* of the following urges:

1. The inclosed card, properly filled out and mailed, will bring you one of our fully illustrated and informative catalogues.
2. By filling out and mailing the inclosed card, you indicate your desire to have one of our agents explain the "Princess V" motor boat to you at your home. Our agent is not a salesman, but a trained expert who will answer your questions. Therefore avail yourself of this opportunity by mailing the inclosed card today.
3. We invite you to visit our sales rooms at 17 Atlantic Avenue, where you will find a complete line of motor boats on display, among them the "Princess V."

Position of the urge.—The stimulus to action completes the body of the letter. The complimentary close follows immediately.

The inverted urge.—Material inserted between the clincher and the complimentary close obscures and weakens the urge. The clincher cannot clinch unless it leads without interruption to the desired action. The writer, therefore, should guard against using the inverted urge.

Inverted: Merely by dropping the attached card into the mail box, you bring to your store a free trial order of fifty pounds of Perfection sugar. Let Perfection prove to you what it can do.

Better: To bring to your store a free trial offer of fifty pounds of Perfection brand sugar, sign the attached card, now. Mail it today.

Inverted: Drop in the next time you are downtown and look them over. Our line is complete in all sizes and styles, and they are fitted by expert shoe specialists.

Better: We carry, at all times, a complete line of all sizes and styles of shoes, which are fitted by expert shoe specialists. Step into our store next time you are in our neighborhood.

Vital phrasings.—Conventional, time-worn phrases lack vitality to stimulate action. On the other hand, novel or "clever" endings are too often cheapening in effect. Clever endings, moreover, weaken the urge by calling attention to themselves instead of to the desired action. The result is that the reader is conscious of the words at the moment he should be moved by the message. You can word the ending in an original way without striving for oddity.—Observe that the vital ending is always compact.

Command: Tell your dealer when it will be convenient for you to drive the car.

Suggestion: Your dealer will be glad to have you inform him when it will be convenient for you to drive the car.

Suggestion: Your check by an early mail will help win the battle. (Campaign for funds.)

Hackneyed command: Send your check by return mail.

Vague: Remember we are ready to help you.

Vague and vulgar: For both our sakes we hope you'll come across.

Vague: If you want to know more, return the post card.

Cheap: Get busy with that order blank, now.

Not specific: You can have genuine Mohler pencils for the price of the ordinary kind. May we prove this?

Specific but ambiguous: Permit us to prove this by filling out and mailing the inclosed card.

Better: Permit us to prove this. Fill out and mail the inclosed card.

A single sales letter.—The four functions of the complete sales appeal are incorporated effectively in the following letter:

Dear Sir:

Three A.M. of a winter's morning! And your feet like ice!

How often have you taken your hot water bag to bed with you, only to wake up in the middle of the night and find it has cooled off at the time you need it most? To reheat it means groping into the dark kitchen to get hot water. That is too much trouble; so you lie in the dark and suffer.

Many a cold night you have lost sleep and wondered the while why someone didn't invent a hot water bottle without water.

The Comfort Hot Bottle satisfies your needs. It is encased in a durable aluminum container and filled with "comfort crystals." The inclosed booklet pictures and fully describes this wonderful new chemical preparation, which has been perfected by the chemists of the Universal Drug Company after years of research.

The Comfort Hot Bottle is not a novelty. It has been widely used in New England and Canada for three years. We have hundreds of letters from satisfied and delighted users.

The Comfort Hot Bottle lives up to its name for comfort and heat. You use it when you go to bed, and you can use it again if you wake up cold—without leaving your bed.

Before you immerse the bottle in hot water, the comfort crystals are in crystal form, but the heating turns them into liquid, which keeps the bottle comfortably hot for several hours. To reheat the bottle, all you do is to remove the stopper, so as to allow cold air to draw into the air chamber. The liquid cannot spill, because it is in a sealed container. The cold air, which changes the liquid back to crystals, reheats the bottle.

The Comfort Hot Bottle is guaranteed to give satisfaction indefinitely.

A hot bottle reheated by cold air is what you have been looking for, especially at the low cost of $4.50.

Mail the inclosed card with your check or money order for $4.50 and we shall send you the Comfort Hot Bottle at once.

We guarantee satisfaction or refund your money immediately upon return of the bottle at our expense. But you will not part with the bottle at any price, once you have used it.

Be comfortable. Send your order now.

Yours truly,

Analysis of this letter shows that the theory of the complete sales approach in a single letter is attractively applied. The opening paragraph is gripping. It is concrete. It dramatizes the situation attractively. It is appropriate. It ties up with the reader's interests.

The second paragraph stresses the opening thought. It is personal. Its homely, practical appeal is expressed vividly.

The third paragraph leads from the attention-getter to the fourth paragraph, which creates desire. Desire is, to be

sure, already awakened by the second paragraph, but the fourth paragraph definitely creates desire by showing how the Comfort Hot Bottle specifically meets the need explained in the opening paragraphs.

The fifth paragraph creates more desire by showing how the bottle really satisfies people in need of a hot bottle. This paragraph at the same time begins to establish conviction.

The appeal to convenience in the sixth paragraph intensifies desire, but at the same time prepares the way for the longer seventh paragraph, which definitely brings forward details to convince the reader by reassuring him on the service offered by the hot bottle.

The eighth paragraph convinces him that he can make no mistake in purchasing this bottle. The ninth paragraph, with its price appeal, shows him that he can afford to buy the bottle.

The closing paragraphs, the tenth and the eleventh, stimulate action. The reader is again reassured regarding the absolute guaranty of satisfaction or promise to refund his money. Action is made easy. The reader is told just what to do. The letter closes with the urge to act at once.

Analysis makes clear, furthermore, that the four functions do not appear separately as clearly marked units. To be sure, every good sales letter begins by capturing attention; and it closes by stimulating action. Between these two extremes, however, freedom is allowed the skillful writer in the organization of ideas. The indispensable requirement is that the sentences flow without interruption. Whatever the order of ideas, the appeal is effective when successive stimuli lure the reader from sentence to sentence, compelling him to read, absorbing his attention, and sustaining his interest to the point where interest is converted into favorable action. In a good letter, then, attention shades into desire, desire into conviction, and conviction, in turn, is converted into action without perceptible interruption of the flow of ideas.

Problems in Sales Letter Writing.

Note.—The succeeding exercises, based on actual business letters and problems, are intended to facilitate oral and writ-

ten discussion, and to test the student's ability to write effective single sales letters.

I. Exercises for Oral and Written Discussion.

1. Determine whether the following excerpt is from an advertisement or a sales letter:

Vitrified Brick Pavements Outlast the Bonds.

The gamble in buying a brick pavement is never "Will it last?" but only "How long will it last?"

Napoleon laid brick pavements in Holland, and there are brick pavements in use there today which are more than one hundred years old.

The United States has scores of brick pavements that are more than thirty years old. Some of these should give half a century of service, in spite of modern traffic, before the original brick is replaced.

Can you name a pavement in your vicinity, other than brick, which at a comparable cost has given you even twenty years of service?

Paving bonds pay for paving, but taxes pay for paving bonds. See to it that your community buys paving wisely. See to it that your community buys vitrified brick, the pavement that outlasts the bonds.

Does the opening challenge attention? Does the word "gamble" weaken the second paragraph? Can you state the closing thought without verbal jugglery?

2. Criticize the following attention-getters. Point out specifically what you approve and what you disapprove. Do not approve an opening unless it incorporates the "you attitude."

(1) We desire to call your attention to the bonds of the Westwood Apartment Company.

(2) Do you feel like twenty or sixty?—(Selling shoes.)

(3) If I offered you twenty-five dollars a week, would you accept it? (Say, can a fish swim?)—(Save money by purchasing in quantities.)

(4) May we send you, on approval, the October issue of our business journal, the "Harvard Business Review"?

(5) Do you buy bonds?—(Suppose the prospect does not?)

(6) The inclosed circular features an issue of Reliable First Mortgage Bonds, which have an unusually large margin of security.

(7) Through Mr. Wilbur I was informed today that we have just purchased a new first mortgage bond issue of exceptional merit, which will be offered to the general public shortly.

(8) Almost every investor in Central European securities has lost money. A change for the better has arrived.

(9) Don't pass up this offer—it's your opportunity to waterproof and preserve your roofs this fall at a minimum cost.

(10) If there is any way in which I can serve you in fitting out your home, I shall be more than pleased to do so, and at prices far below those of any other store in Boon County.

(11) For three days, beginning Monday, December 29 (when your boys are at home for the holidays), we offer our regular patrons first choice in our Annual Advance Clearance Sale of boys' wool and wash clothing.

(12) I suppose you are aware that I have opened a Men's Shop right here in our own little Palisade.

(13) It might interest you to figure this out—How much is it costing you by the month to keep your present car?

(14) The Holiday season is here. Everything points to the greatest wave of buying that the country has ever known. Christmas-fund checks will not be re-deposited in the banks this year. People will enjoy the comforts of life again.

We want you to spend your Christmas fund here this year. (Dealer letter to customers. The letter sells furniture.)

(15) Possibly you will spend the summer in Europe. Your plans may be fully formed or, perhaps, you have been thinking about the trip but have not attended to the details. If the latter is true, then permit me to invite you to call at this office and consult with our travel experts. (American Express letter to people going to Europe)

(16) That you may fully appreciate information given out in our circulars at the time when we offer new issues to the public, and the correctness of the statements made in such circulars, we take the privilege of giving you some information regarding the Aldine Court Apartment Building, southwest corner of Thirty-second Street and Grand Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, being the security for $180,000 first mortgage real estate gold bonds, bearing interest at 6½%, which bonds we offered to our clients on or about November 1, 1922. A picture of the security covered by this bond issue is herewith inclosed.

3. Find the central selling appeal in each of the following letters. State the appeal in a compact sentence. Write the sentence.

(1)

Gentlemen:

Did you ever set up a map of the United States and mark, in bold figures, the number of dentists within the various State outlines?

If you did, you would mark down 2,500 for California, 800 for Nebraska, and 7,100 for New York, with other States accordingly.

Then, following this, have you ever wanted to talk to all the dentists, in every State, by the use of one medium? If you have, "Oral Hygiene" answers your want. For "Oral Hygiene" has a circulation of 55,000.

"Oral Hygiene" covers the entire United States. It reaches every practicing dentist whose name can be secured.

Your advertisement in "Oral Hygiene" will enter the office of practically every prospect for your dental supplies and dental equipment, in all States of the country. On the first of each month, the postman will deliver your sales message to dentists who are making money, and who have money to purchase dental products.

This complete sales coverage of "Oral Hygiene," used twelve times a year, gives the manufacturer twelve opportunities to sell his goods or his ideas to the entire dental profession. Combined with good advertising copy, such coverage results in sales.

May "Oral Hygiene" carry your sales message during the next twelve months?

Very truly yours,

(2)

Dear Sir:

It would be a great thing for us to service the cars of all our owners in New York—a wonderful thing.

But it is a much greater thing to deserve it—to do business in such a way that our owners would come to us because Willys-Overland, Inc. cares for their interests.

To give values and render such service that we will always keep a customer, is our constant aim.

This is done by placing your interests above everything else—by serving you so perfectly that you will be permanently satisfied to bring your car here.

Won't you come in, and give us a chance to prove our service?

Cordially yours,

4. Which of the following letter paragraphs contains the most effective description? Which the least effective? Precisely why?

Whether you fish for muscallonge among the beautiful Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence River, or for bass and bluefish in the open sea, you need an "Eaglewing" to take you to where the "big fellows" are biting. Imagine yourself "outward bound," with the wind and

spray in your face, plunging through long swells with the "smother" whipping over the bows. You can start out on any one of these fine mornings in your own "Eaglewing."

"Eaglewing" is the Princess of motor boats, built with the approved "V" bottom, especially designed for speed. You will find detailed specifications in the inclosed circular.

Observe that "Eaglewing" is made in two sizes, with proper motor equipment for each size. The powerful engine is a four-cycle, four-cylinder, valve-in-head "Brooks." It is the latest design in marine engineering. For economy, ease in starting, and dependability over a long period of use, it is unsurpassed.

"Eaglewing" is comfortable as well. Notice on page seven of the circular, the wicker chairs, the cushions, with the unmistakable suggestion of comfort. How you would enjoy cruising in a boat like that. You will find electric running-lights, a self-starter, and many other devices for safety and comfort.

The succeeding paragraphs are from the inclosure describing part of the reading course outlined for purchasers of the twenty-volume "Outline of Knowledge," which is a set of books sold through the mails.

After reading a chapter on the formation and rise of the Greek Empire, we detour into the studio of some famous Athenian sculptor whose work stands to this day without a rival. Then we visit the hut where Socrates lived, and hear that great philosopher utter those beautiful thoughts which moved the oracle at Delphi to say, "O Socrates, of all men in Athens thou art the wisest."

Now we visit the Senate at Athens and hear Demosthenes deliver his "Philippic Orations." Æschylus recites his first tragedies at the great theater of Dionysius. Then our guide discourses to us in another chapter on Greek government, and takes us to the battlefront with King Philip of Macedonia.

Even the legends of Homer are no more thrilling than the true adventures of the great soldier, Alexander the Great, whom we accompany to the battlefields on which at the age of thirty-two he conquered the greatest states in the ancient civilized world.

A description of the Strand Reënforced Toboggan:

The Strand Reënforced Toboggan is made of birch, finished in natural wood with one coat of shellac and one coat of varnish on top. The middle and two side slats are thicker than the other four. This arrangement adds greatly to the strength of the toboggan. As it decreases the

running surface on an iced slide, it will increase the speed and also make it a great deal easier to steer in the snow. The Strand Reënforced Toboggan has a long, graceful bend in front, which enables it to take a bump without a jar and also makes it easy running in deep snow. Each toboggan is supplied with a heavy rope, with leather loops. The toboggan comes in lengths of from 4 to 12 feet.

(4) I want to acquaint you with these York State apples. I want you to enjoy the tang and flavor of these fine, luscious gifts of nature—quality, perfect fruit, and so different from the usual store variety. You have to bite into these apples to appreciate how distinctly different they are.

With the help of Uncle Sam, I deliver these treats direct from my orchard to your door—at a great saving to you.

Read more about my special offers on the inside pages of this letter.

The apples come to you fresh as the dew—the spicy McIntosh, the snappy Northern Spy.

5. Add to the list of instincts discussed in this chapter. Read the article on "Instincts" in the encyclopedia, or use the index in a book on psychology. (1) Make a list of articles that can be sold by an appeal to these instincts. (2) For each article find the central selling point. (3) Explain how this appeals to the instinct. Use the paragraphs on page 165 as a model.

6. To illustrate the five kinds of evidence used to create conviction, clip advertisements of articles suitable for direct-by-mail selling. In each case explain how your choice illustrates the point. Bring the advertisements to class.

7. Find an advertisement using physical description effectively. Find one using emotional description. Explain your choice by specific reference to words and phrases as well as to the organization of the descriptive details. Bring the advertisements to class.

8. Find advertisements containing examples of substantiated facts, testimonials, references, tests, samples, trial uses. Bring the advertisements to class. Be ready to explain your choice.

9. Does the confidence-inspiring Packard slogan, *Ask the man who owns one,* generalize the testimonial appeal or the reference appeal?

10. Criticize the following endings. Rewrite where necessary.

(1) We should be pleased to have your son enroll for one of the courses taught in our school.

(2) We shall be pleased if you can find books on our lists which are suitable for your requirements.

(3) May we have your reply on the back of this letter?

(4) Just sign your name in the margin of this letter.

(5) Any authorized Mondayjoy dealer will bring a Mondayjoy Washer right to your home. Wash with it. Then if it doesn't sell itself, don't keep it. Remember, there's no obligation. Just use the telephone.

(6) Get full information now about this easy-payment plan. Ask for the free booklet, giving many simple and efficient ways of using fuel. Write today and have the "Efficiency Coal Regulator" installed tomorrow.

11. Reorganize the following ending:

Telephone or write your reservations to the United States Lines.

Make your bookings now for the first voyage in 1925 of the superb Leviathan, the largest ship in the world. Excellent accommodations are still available, but to insure your choice it is advisable to act at once, as the demand is unusually heavy. Your expectations of luxury, service, and cuisine will be fulfilled on this ship.

12. Write an action-clinching close for the Owens tooth brush material on pages 169, 170.

13. Discuss the comparative merits of the following trial forms of an urge to be used in a letter soliciting funds for the erection of a new church building.

(1) As soon as the inclosed card is returned to us, it will be substantial evidence of your friendship and interest in our church.

(2) The inclosed card, promptly returned to us, will be substantial evidence of your friendship and interest in our church.

(3) By returning the inclosed card promptly, you will give us substantial evidence of your friendship and interest in our church.

(4) You can give us substantial evidence of your friendship and interest in our church by returning the inclosed card promptly.

14. Analyze the letters reproduced below to determine how effectively the writer has observed the four functions of the sales approach in the single sales letter.

(1)

Dear Sir:

Can you get your freshmen to think?

If you can, their writing will take care of itself. You will be interested in what Christopher Morley says about this on the first page of the inclosed circular.

Those who have used "Sentences and Thinking" in its original edition know that the book was successful in getting students to see the reason behind the rules of writing, to think, and to express their thoughts logically.

The revised and enlarged edition of "Sentences and Thinking" not only does this, but in addition provides a complete handbook of revision. The space given to discipline in revision has been practically doubled. The aim has been to make this section of the text comprehensive, complete, and adequate to the needs of every student.

The inclosed circular tells you all about this. On the inner pages you will find also a reproduction of the new Revision Chart, specimen pages from the book, and an outline of its contents.

If, after looking through the circular, you wish for further information concerning this new edition, we shall be glad to hear from you. Please do not hesitate to fill out the order blank if you care for an examination copy of the book.

Yours very truly,

(2)

Dear Sir:

Can we not interest you in our Comfort Hot Bottle?

Thousands of druggists have tried and are trying this non-leakable and practically unbreakable bottle.

Let us prove to you the value of this bottle. We are certain you will have a ready market for the Comfort Hot Bottle.

Important: A discount of 30% will be given from the list price for orders in quantities of one dozen or more.

Yours truly,

(3)

Dear Sir:

The road builder
fortifies himself against the hazards of cheaply constructed highways if he uses Truscon Wire Mesh as a road reënforcement.

Truscon Wire Mesh used as a base for concrete prolongs the life of the road at least 25%. It is economical to handle and easy to lay, and is furnished in practically any width and area desired.

Truscon Contraction Joints allow for expansion and contraction of pavement, forming a straight regular crack which is a guide mark down the center of the pavement. The use of Contraction Joints with Truscon Wire Mesh results in an economical road which stands up under heaviest traffic.

Write us for a copy of "Modern Road Construction." It is brimful of facts and helpful details.

Sincerely yours,

Would the opening be more gripping with the "if" clause beginning the sentence? Why not? Notice the effective repetition. Would you rearrange the close? Why?

(4)

Dear Sir:

Have you ever given thought to the advantages and conveniences to be gained by the possession of an Underwood Portable Typewriter?

The Underwood Portable machine is a non-folding typewriter and embodies all the sterling qualities of the parent machine, but has in addition the valuable feature of real portability, weighing, together with the case, only 8½ lbs.

I am sending herewith descriptive literature. If you will kindly fill in and return the inclosed postcard the writer will be pleased to call any time suitable to your convenience and demonstrate to you the Underwood Portable Typewriter.

Thanking you, I am,

Yours very truly,

Point out all faults in expression. Is the breathless second paragraph effective? or would three sentences be better? Make an outline for a letter to take the place of this one. Add material if you need to, but certainly change the order of thoughts used by the writer. Write the letter.

(5)

My dear Dr. Babthorne:

President Butler has taken his hat off to the editors of the "Columbia Alumni News." In fact, he said recently, had he had two hats he would have taken both off to the Christmas number.

He believes the "News" is one of the biggest factors in winning good will for the University. It gives the Alumni, the people of New York and of the entire country and abroad, the best information as to the ideals of service and as to the magnitude of the work Columbia is doing.

The "Alumni News" will bring all this to you, once a week, during the college year. Every bit of what it contains is of interest to you.
I want to let the Alumni know that all the members of the Faculty subscribe to the "News."

We have taken the privilege of entering your name on the list of subscribers and are sending you a blank, asking you kindly to return it at your earliest opportunity, and to make out your check for three dollars, payable to the "Columbia Alumni News."

Faithfully yours,

(6)

Dear Sir:

As a progressive poultry-raiser you can learn from the inclosed folder how to raise every chick worth raising.

The Raise-All Incubators and Brooders are neither advertised in publications nor sold through dealers. There are two reasons why you can get your incubator and brooder from us at such a low price. First, we sell direct to the customer. Second, we are the largest manufacturers of incubators and brooders in the country.

In the folder you will see that the Raise-All Brooder is easily cleaned and that it is equipped with a large special improved oil burner so designed as to radiate the heat scientifically. Experts at agricultural colleges have approved this design.

With the Raise-All Incubator and Brooder you can be successful with the least possible effort.

Our iron-clad guaranty of satisfaction or money back has stood the test of twenty-eight years of selling to thousands of poultry raisers. If, after thorough examination, you decide that the Raise-All is not in every respect satisfactory to you, send it back at our expense. You will not send it back. In fact, you will not part with it at any price.

We know that you will be delighted with the Raise-All Incubator and Brooder.

We have the machines ready and they will be on their way to you within twenty-four hours after we receive your order.

Use the inclosed order blank.

Yours truly,

(7)

Dear Friend:

Have you ever heard of a watch that keeps running forever?

Sochard Swiss watches do.

You just wind them. Sochard does the rest.

Sochard Swiss watches are made from parts imported direct from Switzerland. These are assembled and placed by Sochard, the Swiss watch expert, in cases to suit every pocketbook, whether you have $15 or $50, or much more, to invest.

Wouldn't you like to give her a wonderful gift like this for Christmas?

And with every watch goes the guaranty that for the life of the watch it will be kept running under the conditions stated on the inclosed warranty slip.

Come over to Maiden Lane (Number 1) and see the large and excellent display of fine Sochard Swiss watches in cases of unique and most attractive design.

The diagram on this letter sheet tells you exactly how to step from the Cortlandt Street Subway Station to Sochard.

Yours very truly,

15. What kind of evidence is used in the following letters to convince the reader?

(1)

Dear Sir:

A little letter such as this on Warren's Cameo is a welcome visitor in any home.

It is not noisy. It does not clash with the quietest home atmosphere. Yet, because of its dignified restraint, it will always be read attentively.

It does its selling quietly and unobtrusively, yet effectively.

If your product is sold to women, we respectfully suggest that you consider this type of illustrated letter carefully.

It is printed through silk from typewriter type.

Warren's Cameo is the paper used.

Yours very truly,

The S. D. Warren Company.

(2)

Dear Sir:

The question of how to approximate the appearance of typewriter type in a large edition of four-page letters is sometimes disturbing.

For this reason, the method used in printing this page may be interesting.

First this page was set in typewriter type. A clean proof was taken in black on white paper. From this proof, the engraver made a line negative. He then stripped a 150-screen halftone negative over the face of the letters in the line negative. A plate was etched on copper.

The printing was done from an electro of this plate.

It is our belief that the letter closely approximates the appearance of the ribbon effect of the typewriter.

Yours very truly,

The S. D. Warren Company.

(3)

Dear Sir:

If you place your palm on a plate of Yawman and Erbe Fire-Wall Steel lying over a gas flame,

Why doesn't the flame burn your hand?

"Asbestos" is the answer.

A single plate of steel would grow red-hot in a few seconds; but it takes heat a long time to penetrate two walls of steel with asbestos and air space between.

That's the secret of the greater protection of "Y and E" Fire-Wall Steel Files—the only steel files built with two walls of steel plus two layers of asbestos on all sides of your papers.

"Y and E" Fire-Wall Steel Files are offered for all kinds and sizes of records.

Without obligating you in any way, a "Y and E" representative will be glad to demonstrate the extra fire resistance of this file.

Send the inclosed card today.

Yours truly,

The attention-getter in the foregoing letter represents a combination of what two types? Would a period be more effective than the semicoln after "seconds" in the fourth paragraph? Why? Is the purpose to make the sale?

(4)

Dear Mr. Branigan:

Autumn has slipped past and you have not started advertising with us.

We are producing results each month in "Oral Hygiene" for such firms as: The Dentinol & Pyorrhicide Company, Colgate, Lehn and Fink, Prophylactic Brush Company, Lavoris Chemical Company, Zonite Products Company, Rubberset Company, Dental Products Company, McKesson & Robbins, and E. R. Squibbs and Son. There are others too.

Such a list should, I think, be considered conclusive proof that Oral Hygiene can produce results for the Pyrodento Company.

Why not give us a chance? Every one of these firms hesitated at one time and questioned our ability to produce results for them. Now they repeat their contracts each year, and we invariably prove that the 50,000 dentists who read Oral Hygiene are responsive to the advertising in its pages.

I sent you a page of advertising copy in September. That should produce returns.

With slight modifications to suit the season, you can use that in the January issue. Or we shall be glad to prepare several pages immediately, for your consideration, to be used in the January and following issues.

Act now for increased sales through Oral Hygiene.

Very truly yours,

How can you improve the display of the second paragraph in the foregoing letter?

16. Which of these two letters is the more convincing? Why? In your criticism, consider *compactness, concreteness,* and *construction.*

(1)

Gentlemen:

The ever-increasing, nation-wide acceptance of The Noiseless Typewriter is more than the recognition usually accorded a good product.

It is the triumph of a great idea—an idea that means better working conditions and more satisfactory output for everyone in an office.

Let us give you a short explanation of the "Why and How" of the Noiseless.

1. Why The Noiseless Typewriter is the only inherently quiet typewriter.
2. Why it is the fastest stock machine built.
3. Why it has the lightest touch of any typewriter.
4. How it makes clean carbons and produces accurately aligned work.
5. How its construction makes it so unusually durable.
6. Why we claim it to be the most economical typewriter built.

A glance at the inside of the folder will convince you.

Sincerely yours,

The Noiseless Typewriter Company, 253 Broadway, New York, used a four-page folder letter, illustrated, on the front page of which the foregoing letter appeared. Criticize the reference to inclosure.

(2)

Gentlemen:

With The Noiseless Typewriter there is no need to place your stenographers in a distant part of the office, with loss of time coming and going to take dictation. They can write speedily near by. They will not disturb.

The Noiseless not only brings you quiet, but it also represents improvements in every phase of typewriter service. It is the fastest stock typewriter made. It has the lightest, most elastic touch of any typewriter.

It can be operated with the least fatigue.

It produces neat, even, and accurately aligned work. The elimination of the hammer blow method of writing reduces wear and tear on the machine. There is less time lost because of repairs. The metal platen never requires replacement.

Let us demonstrate its golden quiet and pleasing operation in your office. There will be no obligation. The card is inclosed for your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

17. The succeeding letters offer material for a study of tone quality in sales letters. Each has a character distinctly its own, according to the tone level adopted by the writer. Find the tone level in each letter. Is it characterized by simplicity, redundancy, inflation, directness, matter of fact, formality, informality, humor, and the like? Is it extravagant, dignified, cheap, vulgar, snappy, colloquial, neighborly, folksy,

boastful, vivid, colorless, playful? Include in this exercise any of the preceding letters you wish, but do not omit the Warren letters in Exercise 15.

(1) *From the Frank E. Davis Fish Company, Gloucester, Mass.*

Dear Sir:

If you were "among those present" when I told my "fish story" at the Pittsburgh Convention of the Direct Mail Advertising Association, perhaps you heard enough about fish to last you the rest of your natural life. Since I've been back "on the job," however, so many of the Conventionites have written me asking for more "fish news" that I made up my mind to write to all of you—hence this message.

There are no two ways about it—if you do like good fish, the kind that makes your mouth water the moment it comes to the table, you can and ought to get it "direct from the fishing boats" as we supply it.

Imagine, for example, a nicely browned mackerel set before you, its tempting aroma suggesting its appetizing deliciousness—or a crisp, dainty lobster salad—or some real codfish cakes made in the old-fashioned way from honest-to-goodness codfish—aren't these real treats for winter days? Yet they are just hints of the many good things you can enjoy as often as you wish, and without tiresome shopping on your part.

Just look over the inclosed folder. It tells its own story. It's like "moving the ocean to your doorstep." Everything in the folder is guaranteed to please. Select what you want and I'll send it on approval. If you don't like it, it costs nothing. How's that for fairness?

Truly, I'm anxious to have you a Davis customer, and if you'll send your order directly to me on the inclosed card, I'll take care of it myself just as though you were here watching me. What do you say? Are you "with me or agin me"?

If you'd like to see some of my "direct mail stuff" just say so when you order, and I'll send some. This may be "bait," but as Patrick Henry said, "If it is, make the most of it."

Yours very truly,

When the writer establishes contact, does he at the same time strike the keynote of the letter? Does the urge sound in harmony with the attention-getter? What type of attention-getter is used? What kind of description is used? Effectively?

(2) *From the publishers of the International Encyclopedia.*

Dear Sir:

At the recent convention of the Direct Mail Advertising Association which you and I attended, John Howie Wright said: "Anything that can be sold, can be sold by mail." His remarks, and those of the other fine speakers at the convention, so inspired me that I said: "I'll try out some of this direct mail stuff on these good folks themselves and see whether it will work." So here goes.

You ought to be a satisfied possessor of "The New International Encyclopedia." Its purchase will be one of the best investments you ever made. (That's a perfectly safe statement to make.) It is a standard reference work, made in America for Americans. The present edition was published in 1916, gone over again in 1922, and now brought right up to date by the addition of a two-volume Supplement just issued, which is described in the accompanying circular.

In an encyclopedia, you want completeness, authoritativeness, easy availability, attractive presentation, and late information. The New International Encyclopedia meets all these requirements and gives you much more besides. But you have too much to do during office hours to read a long letter and I am going to ask you to take home the inclosed literature. Please do that for your own benefit and look over the material tonight (or, tomorrow night, if you have to go to the lodge or something like that tonight).

To make this a 100% sales letter, I must end it with some of the "you stuff," as Mr. Ashby called it at the convention. Well, all I can say is that if YOU will show enough interest in The New International Encyclopedia to fill out and return the inclosed post card, YOU will have taken a step in the right direction. For if YOU should place a set of the Encyclopedia in your home, YOU will never regret having done so, especially if there are children there.

Here's hoping,

Is the tone as well sustained as in the previous letter? Is the urge properly placed? or would you rearrange the sentence order?

(3) *Addressed to bankers by the National Association of Finance Companies.*

Gentlemen:

There is a growing tendency to depart from safe practice in the financing of automobiles, which if unchecked is very apt to break down all

of the safeguards that have made such an exceptional record in this line of business.

In some states passenger cars are being financed with a down-payment of 25% or less, the balance payable in from sixteen to twenty-four months. Bankers are alive to the danger of this situation and have taken definite steps toward correcting it, as shown by the inclosed pamphlet. We are strongly in accord with the views expressed therein.

We believe, with them, that on passenger cars a down-payment of at least 33% of the cash or 30% of the time selling price should be required, with a maximum of twelve *equal* monthly payments for the balance.

The success of this movement depends largely upon the support of the bankers. For the sake of the industry as a whole, we strongly urge you to impress the saneness of these views upon your customers who are Finance Companies, Dealers, or Bonding Companies who guarantee automobile paper.

You will find in the pamphlet a form of questionnaire worked out between committees of Finance Companies and Bankers, which will help you in passing upon the credit of your customers in this line.

Respectfully submitted,

(4)

Dear Sir:

You have gone into a business venture to make profits. Good luck to you.

Your records must show you at all times how your business is progressing.

We propose to open such books for you, audit them monthly, and render you periodical reports on the results of your financial operations.

With records of past performances, you can safely plan future activities.

The only cost of this assistance to you is $15.00 the month.

Can you afford to do without this help at such small expense?

Yours for good records,

(5)

Gentlemen:

Here's just what you've wanted for a long time—

A perfected "cushion" type tire for your truck that

(1) cushions the load over the roadbed, protects motor and truck from the pounding jolts and racking vibrations that run up the maintenance costs. This tire makes it easy to get and hold good drivers.

(2) gives the greatest traction ever developed in a truck tire, gets a road hold on any surface, reduces slippage and danger of skidding to the final minimum.

(3) gives exceptionally long and satisfactory service because of the super-resilient tread compound.

We've got these new U.S. "cushions" ready for you, and the equipment to put them on quickly and keep your trucks going.

'Phone us for prices. Let us show you what these "cushions" will save you.

Yours truly,

(6)
Paging Mister J. B. Knox:

I see by the list on my desk this morning that unless you act at once, you will miss what is perhaps the most valuable issue of Hotel Management we have ever published.

Don't let this happen. It is too easy to let a matter of this kind slip by. You are a busy man, but if you will OK your initials in the space below, Hotel Management will continue to come to you without interruption. To miss any number of Hotel Management now is to risk missing an idea or plan that may mean hundreds of dollars to you.

A stroke of the pen—today—insures your not missing a single one of these plans. Tear off and mail this card at once—for insurance. It's all stamped and addressed.

Sincerely yours,

(7) *Subject: Automobile Loans.*

Dear Sir:

Whenever you need Ready Cash come around and see us. We will give it to you without any red tape or publicity.

It's a cinch. All you have to do is to tell us your name, address, amount you wish. After we get this information, you come in the following day for your money, which will be waiting for you.

We advance loans from $200 to $2000 to owners of pleasure and commercial cars, and the best part of it is that the car remains in your possession, and you pay the loan back on the monthly payment plan.

If you ever get in a pinch come up to see us, bring your bill of sale, insurance policy, and owner's license, and we will take care of the rest.

Sincerely yours,

(8) *From a Dye Works.*

Dear Sir:

The next time you send us your suit or overcoat to be cleaned and repaired, please examine it when it is returned to you. You will find that all the little details have been carefully attended to: the fabric fresh and clean throughout, including pockets and trouser-cuffs; pressing that will stay pressed; the necessary mending neatly done. If you don't find this to be true, we want to know it.

Of course we've been told many times that our cleaning and repairing service on men's clothes is excellent, so we've come to believe it.

But we don't like to pat ourselves on the back and sing our own praises all the time. It isn't good for anyone, nor does it sound well.

You be the judge and decide whether we give a mother's care to men's wear. You are welcome at all times to visit our plant.

Check us up. We'll appreciate it.

Truly yours,

(9)

Dear Sir:

You have undoubtedly heard of the almost fabulous profits made by purchasers in Florida real estate. Most of these were made in and around Miami, the fastest-growing city in the United States.

By reading the inclosed folder you will learn some of the wonderful possibilities of Florida, and especially Miami's newest suburban development, where you can safely buy now.

Suppose you were guaranteed by a New York Trust Company at the time you purchase your property against loss of your principal? (What does this sentence mean?)

Suppose you were guaranteed by a New York Trust Company the return of your purchase money in full at the time you complete your contract of purchase? (Meaning?)

Suppose there were many other unique features, such as Endowment, financing to build, insurance?

Suppose these suppositions were correct, would you be interested enough to inquire for further particulars?

We shall be glad to send you a booklet describing this wonderful plan in detail, if you will sign and return the inclosed card.

Very truly yours,

(10)

Gentlemen:

"Brevity is the soul of wit" and good business.

Briefly: We want your ENVELOPE business, and lay claim to it because:

(1) Our supplies are selected by experts. Our plant is the most modern and our men take pride in their workmanship. We produce the best quality.

(2) As advertisers, we know the importance of speed and economy. We make it unnecessary to waste a minute's time. A telephone call or a postage stamp reminds us of your order. We give excellent service.

(3) We purchase raw materials in the largest possible quantities necessary to obtain lowest prices. We are manufacturers and sell direct to the consumer. We sell at lowest prices.

We want you as a permanent customer and shall not accept your order unless our service entitles us to another.

Yours truly,

(11)

Dear Publisher:

You have heard say that there is no letter like a brief letter.

We should like to sell you a book.

Sell what? The American Newspaper Annual and Directory.

Sell why? Because it serves you year after year in a most important way without cost to you.

Sell when? Right now, when the 1925 edition is right out of the oven.

Here is a card ready to sign.

We have a book ready to ship.

How about giving us the word "Go"?

Very truly yours,

(12)

Dear Sir:

For most of us it is impossible to read all the books we should like to, or should read. Many of us have mental lists of titles which we hope to reach some day. We usually, however, see this list grow larger and larger. Few ever have the time to catch up with it.

The New York Times Book Review publishes each week reviews and news of all the important new books. From its columns you may decide

what books to read now, and gain a conversational knowledge of many other books which you may never succeed in reading.

The subscription price is $1.00 a year—less than two cents a week.

We suggest you fill in the inclosed order form now, so that you may begin taking advantage of this service.

Yours very truly,

Analyze also the first letter in the next exercise.

18. The three following letters illustrate the type of sales letter employed to interest desirable prospects in the organization represented by the writer.

Study these letters thoroughly to determine how the writer has incorporated the four functions of the sales approach, and how he has observed the seven essential qualities of business writing.

(1)

Dear Sir:

The Committee on Organization invites you to join a representative group of University men in subscribing to the stock of the Hamilton National Bank, not to exceed ten units, as outlined in the inclosed subscription blank.

A limited amount has been reserved for this group in accordance with the Committee's belief in the basic strength of a bank whose stock is broadly held, giving wider connections and greater business.

It is furthermore believed that the investment is one of a type to commend itself to those who appreciate the value of having on the Board of Directors a member of the Columbia university faculty and of having as holders of the stock officers prominent in the University.

A cordial invitation is extended to you to visit the bank's attractive quarters and to meet the officers.

Very truly yours,

(2)

Dear Mr. Winstanley:

The good news has come to me that you attended the Pittsburgh Convention of the Direct Mail Advertising Association.

If I am correct in this you no doubt saw that this Association is earnestly working for the development of better business methods and particularly of direct mail advertising which enters so largely into the sale and distribution of goods.

The honor of serving as chief executive of this Association for the coming year was conferred on me at the Pittsburgh Convention. One of the first steps I want to take is to invite you to join this Association which is composed of buyers and producers of direct mail advertising and is constantly working for the betterment of direct mail advertising.

You will find it exceptionally profitable to be a member this year because every week until the program of the Pittsburgh convention is complete we shall publish in our bulletin one of the addresses and the complete discussion that followed. Perhaps you had a part in these discussions. If so, it should be all the more interesting to you. This will be the only publication of these talks and discussions.

In addition to the foregoing feature, our bulletin contains new thoughts, ideas, and developments relating to direct mail advertising. Our headquarters at Detroit contains a library of reference data, including material showing how direct mail advertising has been successfully used to serve practically every type of business. When you are a member, this service will be at your beck and call. Just read the back of the inclosed application form and you will see how the D.M.A.A. can help you.

If you can make an investment of twenty-five dollars covering our Class B membership, you and your firm will benefit very materially.

Will you not make it possible for me to recognize you as a member of the D.M.A.A.? A prompt answer will be appreciated.

Cordially yours,

President.

(3)

Dear Sir:

It has been suggested to me that because of the similarity of your interests with those of the City Club you might welcome an invitation to become a member.

The activities of our club are varied. The extensive lecture program which we carry on, covering questions of economic, social, and governmental interest; the work carried on by our civic committees, touching the field of the Common Council, the County Board, the School Board, and other boards and commissions; our restaurant and the social features of our club are activities, some or all of which correspond to your natural inclinations.

These are more fully explained in the inclosed folder.

I am extending to you an invitation to become a member of the club.

Very truly yours,

President.

Can you improve the long sentence in the second paragraph of the last letter?

(4) Study also Letter 5 in Exercise 14.

II. Problems in Writing Single Sales Letters.

1. Assume that you are president of a student society in your college or school. It may be an advertising club, writers' club for business and literary composition, a scientific organization, dramatic club, or social organization.

Write a letter to likely prospects, pointing out the advantages to be had by becoming a member. Make the letter an invitation, but sell your club to the reader.

2. Assume that you are business manager of your college or school paper or magazine. Write a persuasive letter urging students to become subscribers.

3. Using one of the advertisements you clipped for Exercises 6, 7, and 8, on page 197, write a sales letter performing the four functions of the sales appeal. Include a concise and concrete description of what the letter is to sell.

4. Assume that you are advertising manager of a men's retail furnishing store patronized by a high class of customer. In order to stimulate sales, you have planned to write a letter to your customers. Your purpose is to induce them to come to your store to make seasonal purchases like light-weight summer suits (such as Palm Beach or pongee suits), shirts, silk hose, hats, collars.

Write the letter. Avoid the announcement style. Use vital, suggestive words. Be careful not to scatter the interest of the reader. Determine upon the central selling point before you begin to write.

5. You have been engaged to write a letter selling the Graystone Moviegraph.

(1) Assume that your unsolicited letter will be mailed on December 10 to boys, but that the final decision concerning the purchase of this machine rests with the boy's parents. (2) The company relies on this letter to make the sale, not to stimulate inquiries. (3) Use an inclosure. (4) You may use the following points as the basis of your appeal.

(1) The Graystone Moviegraph is safe for the home because non-inflammable safety films are used. (2) Every live boy should have at home a Graystone Moviegraph that shows pictures exactly like those in the better class of family movie theatres. (3) Powerful French lenses are built in. (4) The electric cord can be connected to any socket. In homes without electricity the cord can be attached to dry cell batteries. (5) Sturdy and simple construction prevents trouble. Nothing can get out of order. There are no complicated parts. (6) Size of the machine all set up is 15 inches by 9 inches and the weight is three pounds. (7) Send money order or check. (8) The machine is guaranteed to give good, clear, large pictures or your money back. Reference: United Trust Company, Boston, Massachusetts. (9) Order your machine today in time for Christmas. (10) Price of the machine and three reels is $6.95 complete, prepaid and carefully packed. (11) The following reels are only a few of the many in the film catalogue furnished with the machine. They are as large as films used in the theater and are posed by genuine actors. Only clean films are sent out. Films are educational, but lively and full of action. There are humorous films too. Good clean fun.

6. You have been engaged by the owner of a high-class tailoring shop near the campus to write a sales letter to students in your college or school to have their spring suits made at his shop. Write the letter. The letter will contain a style sheet, which also shows samples of the latest fabrics. In place of description of the goods, rely chiefly on interesting the student sufficiently to make him study the style sheet.

7. Write a one-page sales letter to heads of manufacturing establishments, using as a basis for your material the Worthington pump advertisement on page 128. The object of the sales letter is the same as that of the advertisement, to stimulate inquiries.

8. As a sales correspondent in the Anchor Post Iron Works, you have been asked to write an inquiry-producing letter on the Anchor Armored Chain Link Fence. The letter will be sent to a list of plant managers and plant executives.

Your company has offices in all large cities. The letter is sent out from each of these offices. The object is to get the executive to ask for an interview with the local representative.

Prepare the complete mailing.

You may use the following data:

A fence the sneak-thief and night-prowler cannot break through. Unclimbable. Topped by an ugly row of sharp steel barbs. Anchored posts of steel. Fabric of heavy, woven No. 6 steel wire. Unfailing barrier for protecting plant and yard materials. Keeps tramps from building fires near buildings. Armored Fences built to last. All parts covered by an unbroken, rust-resisting armor of zinc: posts, anchors, arms, and fabric. The fabric is rust-resisting coppersteel, galvanized after weaving, as a double safeguard against corrosion. Posts are drive anchored.

9. Prepare a sales letter to a selected list of wealthy prospects, basing your message on the following advertisement. Are you going to use inclosures?

A palatial Florida home for sale. Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Sr., Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Mr. James Gamble, of Procter and Gamble, and many other multi-millionaires and millionaires, abundantly able to select the best locations in the world, have their winter homes in the Halifax country (which is the Daytona-Daytona Beach-Seabreeze-Ormond section). The largest and most palatial home in all this region, situated on the Halifax River, with four acres of ground, is offered for sale. The owner died before the house was occupied. It is, therefore, brand new, perfect in every detail, superbly built of seasoned timber and lumber from Maine. Beautiful grounds and a glorious river view. It is preëminently a home for a family of wealth. For sale at a bargain to close the estate. All property in this section is rapidly advancing in value. Invest now. Benjamin Haskell, Real Estate, Daytona Beach, Florida.

10. Write a one-page letter selling the demonstration of the Packard automobile to prospects listed by local Packard agencies. The letter is prepared at the Packard factory, where it is also typed, dated, and made ready for mailing by the local agencies in various cities. The letter will be signed and mailed by the local agency manager, on the date indicated by the factory. The letter is mailed under the local postage cancelling for its community effect on the prospect.

You may use the following Packard advertisement as a source of material for the letter:

I tell you it would puzzle a man who has been in the automobile business twenty years to pick a car from the advertisements today.

Now, just for instance, you can get "a new and joyous thrill in motoring" for less than fifteen hundred dollars; but if you want a "new

and glorious zest in motoring" it will cost you almost three thousand dollars more. The question is, Is it worth it?

Or you can find in the average automobile section a dozen ads, each of which comes right out flat-footed and says that there was never before such a tremendous value offered at any price.

When you come to the inclosed stuff, it surely has you guessing. It starts out by calling them "magnificent equipages," and works up from that.

Writers even advertise "luxurious appointments." It seems to me that something ought to be done about this.

It makes it fearfully hard to write advertisements. You see, all we are really after is to ask people to ride in the Packard Single Six and drive it themselves on a trip long enough so that they can really size up the new car.

When people take that sort of ride in the Single Six, they usually buy one, because there are a lot of likable things about the car.

But it doesn't sound exciting at all when you write that kind of an ad and put it alongside of the rest of the bunch.

There's a whole lot of people who would gladly pay $2690 for a Packard Single Six if they just knew how good the car is. The Packard itself can tell them just how it stacks up with other cars they have driven.

If we tried to tell you, we wouldn't know how to go about it. We wouldn't want to say less than the other boys have said in their ads around the edge of this one. It wouldn't do us any good to say the same thing—and we don't know how to say any more than they have said.

All we can do is hope you'll come in and let the Packard tell you its own story in its own way.

Chapter VII

APPEALS TO SPECIAL CLASSES

To be genuinely personal, the sales appeal should be adapted as closely as possible to the immediate habits, tastes, desires, needs, and interests of those who read the letter. Thus, for example, letters to women differ in tone, language, and talking points from letters to farmers. Both differ from appeals to bankers, and these in turn are markedly different from letters to salesmen and dealers.

Adjustment of substance, structure, and language to the needs and interests of various classes can be made successfully if the writer is personally acquainted with individuals within each class. In these days of classified mailing lists, the sales appeal can be made so congenial to the individual prospect as to increase perceptibly the total of favorable responses.

The Britannica letter, for example, which is printed below, represents a highly specialized form of class appeal. The loyalty of the group to a well-known and respected university is capitalized in a dignified opening which assures attention. The newsy contents about alma mater stimulate interest. The "reference" nature of the material on the number of copies of Britannica used by the institution and the faculty members carries weight and helps to establish conviction unobtrusively but effectively. The highly special nature of this appeal becomes evident when this letter is compared, for tone and carefully adapted class material, with the Britannica follow-up letter.

Dear Sir:

Dr. Charles W. Eliot recently wrote us:

> "I bought two copies of the New Edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica for the benefit of my two sets of grandchildren. I find them altogether admirable; and my grandchildren, who are at the most inquisitive ages, are of the same opinion. You have rendered a great public service."

An examination of the last Harvard catalogue discloses that one hundred and thirty-one members of the faculty, including eighty-three of the rank of professor, have purchased sets of the Encyclopedia Britannica —not to speak of one or more copies in every department of the University—a record unequaled by any other institution of learning in the world.

An entirely new idea has just revolutionized the manufacture of the Britannica, making it possible for us to sell the work in a New Form, printed in large type from the original plates, at a saving of 46%.

As a Harvard man, would you not like us to send you the beautiful 56-page booklet we have prepared, giving all particulars regarding this New Form?

We should like to send you a copy if you would mail us the inclosed card *already stamped* and addressed.

Very truly yours,
Encyclopedia Britannica
(signed)
President

The following letter is the second in a campaign series mailed to anyone who responded to the Britannica newspaper advertisement.

New York, October 18, 1924.

Dear Friend:

It has just occurred to me that when I wrote to you before about the Britannica in the New Form I did not, perhaps, make clear two points which should be borne in mind if you are seriously contemplating getting a set of the Britannica, as I believe you are.

These two points are: (1) the present splendid opportunity is merely temporary. It can last only as long as there are sets on hand. And (2) there are thousands of people of moderate means, more even than I had imagined, who have always wanted to own the Britannica, but have been deterred by the price. This is their first and greatest chance of getting the large type Britannica at a big saving (nearly one-half, as you know); many have already seized it; not many of this immense waiting public will let it slip by. And this means a continuous and heavy demand on our stock.

The idea of the New Form has created a world-wide sensation. People from all over hail it as a record achievement. Mr. Charles M. Schwab, the steel magnate, for example, writes to me.

> "The publication of the Encyclopædia Britannica in the 'New Form' at such a low price is something much more important than any purely commercial undertaking. It is bringing the most important and authoritative work of its kind in the world within reach of those ambitious people who need it most."

The high reputation which the Britannica in its New Form has established in a few short weeks is amply proved by its sales; in this country, and in Europe, India and Australia, over thirty thousand people have already written to us about it, and more than 250 people a day are buying sets.

You will be interested to know that the advantages of the New Form which have contributed most to its success are:

first—The beautifully large and clear type, printed from the original Cambridge plates.

second—The remarkable saving over the Cambridge Issue, a saving of no less than 46%.

third—The especially attractive appearance of the books, and the firm opaque paper, very thin, yet durable and easy to turn over.

fourth—The handsome free bookcase in gleaming mahogany tones.

fifth—The fact that the New Form is the latest edition, complete and unabridged.

I would like you to read the enclosed booklet, written by some of the foremost men of our day. It will, I think, give you a new and fresh appreciation of the Britannica as something more than a set of books, and reveal it to you as a complete library which in itself covers every subject of human interest—a library indispensable to the ambitious man or woman, and an absolute necessity in every home where there are growing children.

This little booklet will help you to decide whether you really intend to get a set of the Britannica. There isn't over-much time to think about it, as you see. You will have to make your mind up fairly quickly. And if you decide that you really do want a set, my best advice to you, as one of our early inquirers, is to take the very first opportunity you have of placing your order.

The facts are simply these—there are now only 7,500 sets left for the United States and long before Christmas, I am sure, every single one will be gone. I should be very sorry indeed if you were to be disappointed.

Yours faithfully,
Wm. J. Cox
President.

DQY

Letters to women.—The appeal to women in the home is based on woman's characteristic needs and instincts. Among the many that could be mentioned, four appeals dominate: (1) Strongest is the instinct of mother love, which finds expression in thoughts for the welfare of her family. (2) The instinct for the beautiful—in her person and in her background—craves satisfaction. (3) Closely allied to these is the fundamental interest in thrift. This is the money-saving instinct. Advertisers usually appeal to this instinct in their announcements of bargains and sales, and in their use of odd numbers in prices. (4) The appeal to labor-saving instincts must always be shown not to conflict with the thrift instinct, which is fundamental.

Appeals based on the foregoing dominant traits create desire for your products. Conviction is established by vivid suggestion of value.

Woman, says Marion Hertha Clarke, commenting on sales copy, is a dreamer, a visionary. To reach her, one must sell the vision of satisfaction the article will give in beauty and utility. If you sell a utility article like a vacuum cleaner or an electric washer, avoid construction evidence in the spotlight of your appeal. Sell, rather, "dreams of leisure hours, of rest, of happy, contented homes, and simplified housework." The emotional, short-circuit appeal reaches the heart and arouses desire.

"Woman does buy such stuff as dreams are made of. In matters of dress she buys a dream of herself in the eyes of the beholder. In articles of utility she buys the dream of leisure hours. In cosmetics, dreams of personal beauty. In automobiles, dreams of distant places; in books, the dream of culture, education, and amusement. In everything she buys there is a dream; tiny, subconscious perhaps, but a dream notwithstanding."

Values are also important. Although imagination can never be safely neglected, women are well informed about values and prices. "If you have created a strong enough desire and your product satisfies her own test of value, a sale has been made." The meaning of this is that women are intensely practical as well as visionary.

The two fundamental questions are always:

1. How does your product satisfy my longings?
2. Am I going to get full value for my money?

The writer, therefore, cannot afford to overlook such appeals as the following *in addition to* the imaginative appeal:

(1) See, this girl's wash dress has extra tucks that make it easy to let down.

(2) These boys' wash suits are easy to iron—they're made that way.

(3) These bloomers have become extremely popular for fall and winter wear. This garment has the standard eight-inch reënforcement, is cut full and has a neat double elastic cuff below the knee.

French words, out of place in ordinary copy, are used with good effect in the sale of cosmetics, articles of dress, and in delicate foods appealing at least as much to taste values as to nourishment values. What would be pure affectation elsewhere is correct and enticing in the following Ayer paragraphs:

The French have a way of touching common things and making them radiant with new charm.

They wave the wand of magic over mildly interesting perfume, and it becomes an odeur ravishingly seductive. A few yards of dress material, a bit of embroidery, and—Ma foi!—a costume Parisian, elegant, exclusive.

The chef in his shining kitchen takes the unflavored, unsweetened gelatine of J. & G. Cox, Ltd., that comes from Scotland, dour land o' kirks and sturdy virtues, and—Voilà—his soup becomes famous for its richness, nutrition, body. Or with Cox's Gelatine, a bit of left-over fish or meat, a bed of lettuce, an olive or two, and—Très bien!—a bewitching salad.

In the advertising of Cox's Gelatine in America, for the Cox Gelatine Company, New York, we have followed monsieur le chef into his kitchen and stood at his elbow. Here are recipes that reveal his art and expose his thrifty economies—savories that tempt truculent appetites, sauces smooth as cream, provoking desserts, si delicieux. In them madame la housewife finds inspirations that lift the monotony from three meals a day.

Action can be stimulated by a guaranty that the purchase saves money and labor. The trial method is always helpful in the sale of electric washers, refrigerators, sweepers, and the like.

The physical make-up should be attractive and personal. Social stationery frequently and appropriately takes the place of the standard business sheet. Women read a moderately long letter, if it does not arrive on Monday or Friday. The language should be correct, and the tone dignified. The colloquial, breezy style is never in place.

The following letter was sent out by a firm of New York resident buyers:

My dear Mrs. Babthorne:

Have you ever had some friend in the Dress business take you around to a manufacturer's, and let you pick the exact model you wanted, at the wholesale price?

Remember what a bargain that was—how far below the regular Retail Store figures it was priced?

Well, that is the service we offer you on all your dresses and coats. We do not take you to one manufacturer. We bring the best from the stocks of a hundred manufacturers here, for you to choose from, at wholesale prices.

Now, here is the point. As Resident Buyers for a number of out-of-town stores, we are making the rounds of the manufacturers every day. You know yourself what bargains you can pick up even in the stores just by shopping around. Imagine, then, what we can do when we are daily shopping among the manufacturers themselves. Whenever they bring out some "Special," or whenever they have only a few of a style left, or whenever they finish copying their designer's model-gowns, we get them.

At such a time the manufacturers, who cannot afford to bother with such small lots, are willing to let us have them at our own price. The result is that we can offer you many of the season's loveliest and most distinctive models, in all sizes, in the most fashionable colors and materials, at actually less than their regular wholesale prices.

Come and see for yourself. It costs nothing to be shown. And if you can save half on all your dresses, you wish to know it. Be sure to look here before you buy your next dress.

Sincerely yours,

Observe how carefully the writer explains the reason for greatly reduced prices. The letter is built around the appeal to thrift. Do not overlook the excellent construction of the paragraphs, each leading to the significant thrift appeal at the

close of the paragraph. Emphasis is gained by position and repetition.

Letters to farmers.—Letters to farmers and suburbanites are usually much longer than letters to any other class of buyers. Unless they arrive during one of the busy seasons—planting, harvesting—long letters are attentively read. Create desire by appealing to the dominant need—utility.

Conviction is based on elaborately substantiated facts. Inclosures are read thoroughly. The letter must be full of facts, for the farmer is accustomed to turn over arguments in his mind and to think for himself. He is quick to detect shallow generalizations and insincere statements.

The language is plain and even homely, although the writer must avoid the mistake of trying to use the farmer's own type of language. Unless the writer has lived among farmers or has been a farmer himself, he should limit himself to standard English. The tone is frank as well as matter of fact. Action is stimulated by the assurance of guaranteed value and satisfaction or money returned.

It will be readily observed that the following letter to suburbanites and small-town folks is not adapted to the metropolitan-minded apartment dweller. The letter is a good example of the type adapted to the point of view of those who live "in the country," whether on the farm or in the suburbs. The engraved letterhead pictures vineclad homes with well-planted yards. The letter, covering two full pages of closely typed material, contains numerous illustrated inclosures, some in color. This amplified letter, which would be considered diffuse by other classes of busy people, is well adapted to the tastes of the person addressed.

> Your home, the spot of earth supremely blest,
> A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.

Dear Home Lover:

As one who believes in better homes and in improving the home surroundings, we are confident you would enjoy reading Better Homes and Gardens.

Flower and plant "variety" tables, planting schedules, cultural instructions will aid you in increasing the charm and individuality of your home and home surroundings.

To succeed in gardening, building, remodeling, or decorating, it is necessary to have first the completed picture. Better Homes and Gardens gives you just the help you need. Free service from our Subscribers' Information Bureau may save you costly mistakes.

In a little more than two years, this "so different" magazine has attracted nearly 600,000 subscribers. Suburban folks say it is just what they have long wanted. From 2,000 to 3,000 subscriptions are being received daily.

The front cover for December is a real work of art. This number will be literally crammed with garden and home-building information. Among many other distinctive articles, you will find:

Home Glimpses, by Mrs. John D. Sherman.
The Making of a Garden.
And Now We Have Our Home.
Beauty at the Back Door.
What Shall We Do with the Children?
How to Buy and Cook Meats.

Better Homes and Gardens is attractively illustrated. Covers are four-color reproductions of special paintings. It is printed on extra good paper, and each monthly issue contains from 52 to 100 pages.

Other garden and home improvement magazines cost $3 and $5 a year. By acting promptly, you can get the benefit of our introductory rate of three full years for $1, or one year for 35 cents. The subscription rate will advance on January 1 to 60 cents a year.

1000 ideas on garden and home improvement.
Subscribe for three years at $1. Save 80 cents.

"Better Homes and Gardens" sells on news stands for 10 cents a copy. By subscribing at the present low rate, you pay less than 3 cents a copy. Every number is worth the price of a year's subscription.

One of the boys or girls may be pleased to secure a club of subscriptions to earn some of the articles shown on the inclosed Reward Folder. Why not give one of the youngsters your subscription as a "starter" toward a club? Our reward offers are very liberal.

If cash commission is preferred to merchandise rewards, keep 40 per cent. This applies only to orders of two or more subscriptions.

Special reward for promptness!

Let's have an order for two or more subscriptions amounting to at least $2, within ten days, and we shall include with the reward you select, a 103-piece Christmas package as described in the inclosed folder.

Send your subscription with a remittance now, get the benefit of the low rate, and make sure of receiving the beautiful December number. Or, return the Pay-on-Approval card and pay after inspecting the first copy.

Inclosed are a reply envelope and an order blank. Your money back at any time you say you're not more than satisfied with the magazine. With best wishes we ask you to let us know whenever we can serve you.

Sincerely yours,

The alternative offers would be confusing in any but this type of letter. The class addressed, however, will study the letter and inclosures to determine which plan is most fitting.

Letters to executives. —Letters to busy executives, including those to bankers, must be short to secure a reading—less than one page as a rule. The language is dignified and the tone conservative. The high quality of the product and the established solidity of the selling firm's reputation are reflected in the stationery and letterhead. An attitude of respectful restraint is most convincing. The executive is accustomed to making decisions independently, but he needs evidence as to worth of product and fairness of price. These considerations are well left to inclosures.

The chief desire of the banker is a sense of security concerning the worth, appropriateness, and reliability of the product. Conviction is based on value received, and action is stimulated by assurance that the product is standard for the business in which it is to be used.

The letters reproduced below were used to stimulate requests for a bank equipment catalogue. The Art Metal Construction Company reports that the returns from the entire list of bank presidents and other executives were better than nine per cent.

Dear Sir:

You will find much to interest you in our new book, "The Banking House in Art Metal." If you are planning a new building, or if remodeling or extension is contemplated, you will find this new book a helpful and suggestive guide. In any event, we believe that you will like to inspect its attractive pages.

It is not a catalogue. In compiling the book the illustrations have been selected with the idea of showing the possibilities in steel and bronze for bank interiors.

You will see bank equipment ranging from the highly decorative bronze door to the steel omnibus; from executives' desks to document files.

The book will not only show you what has been done, but it will also suggest how you can create for your bank the essential atmosphere of dignity and solidity.

The preparation of this book has involved considerable care and expense, and it is not intended for unlimited distribution. This letter is to bring to your attention the fact that such a book is available and to assure you that we shall be happy to send it, upon request, to you or any other officer of your bank.

Yours very truly,
Art Metal Construction Company
(signed)
General Sales Manager

Dear Sir:

Would it be interesting to you to visit fifty or more representative banks throughout the country for the purpose of gathering ideas on the later developments in bank architecture, equipment, and methods?

It undoubtedly would, but the demands upon your time make such opportunities few.

A great deal of the valuable information that you would gain on such a tour is found in our new, profusely illustrated book, "The Banking House in Art Metal." This is the book of which one prominent banker said, "Your book will be of benefit to us in giving us new ideas for perfecting the arrangement of our bank."

We shall be glad to send a copy on request, without obligation of any sort on your part. Just return the inclosed card.

Yours very truly,
Art Metal Construction Company
(signed)
General Sales Manager

Letters to salesmen.—The sales manager writes encouraging letters to his salesmen on the road, in order to spur them on to greater efforts, and to tie them, by considerate treatment of their problems, closer to the house. Salesmen desire practical help, but they wish also to be treated as human beings. Their loyalty and efficiency are increased if the sales manager remembers them occasionally as men, instead of treating them always as so many units in a system.

Holidays, and especially Christmas, offer opportunities to wide-awake and considerate executives.

Conviction is established by increasing the confidence of the salesmen in the goods they sell. Action is assured by diplomatic suggestions for improvement, statements of appreciation, and encouragement to renewed effort through playing the game of competition with other salesmen on the staff.

The letter may abound in vivid trade expressions, and the tone is always optimistic, even in the face of adverse conditions. Letters to salesmen vary in length according to the needs of the situation—from compact "ginger talks" to long explanations of selling plans in their relation to prices, territory to be covered, and proper methods to be used in selling difficult customers.

The following letter from Mr. E. M. Paget, vice-president and sales manager of the Continental Chemical Corporation, to one of his salesmen shows how a sales manager takes his star salesman down a peg.

Dear Ed Jackson:

I was thinking the other night about Frank Bacon in "Lightnin'," and something about his career. In many ways it reminded me of you.

You know how many years Bacon plugged along doing whatever he could get to do in the best way he could—dreaming all the while of the day when he would be a real star. Finally, after about fifty-five years of discouragement, the day came when he saw his name in big electric letters, reading "Frank Bacon in Lightnin'." If you ever saw him in this play, you know how perfect he was—how carefully he acted every detail. He epitomized his life ambition in that play. It was a cruel blow of fate that snapped him off just as his big moment had arrived.

You know you have some dandy accounts. Based on what all of us call success, you rightly feel that you have "arrived." Think, however, what would happen if a competitor took some of these accounts away from us. You would have to do a lot of hard work to get someone to take their place, wouldn't you?

Why not be another Frank Bacon, by putting every ounce of energy you possess not only into keeping these accounts, but also into developing every possible prospect in your territory? Plug right after them as Bacon plugged for success. Use all your talents to secure the small ones as well as the large ones, for the small one of today is sometimes the big fellow of tomorrow.

You can lose several small accounts and not feel the loss so keenly as when you lose one large account. This is particularly so because the remaining ninety out of the original hundred will probably increase in purchases enough to make up the deflected ten. It is easy, too, for you to get fifteen or twenty to take the place of the ten who have gone.

You have done well, but you want to do more, and I want you to do more, for I know you can.

I know you are not satisfied to stand still. There are better jobs ahead of you, mine included, when you show yourself to be the man to take them. You know, I get some credit too when your sales increase and when it is evident that you are getting the largest volume out of your territory, but you gain more by it than I do. Since, then, we both have something to gain and nothing to lose, will you not show me, and the company, just how good you can be?

I should like to talk to you, and shall the first chance that offers, but I am sure this letter will be received just as it is intended and that it will result in the greatest good for all of us.

Sincerely and truly your friend,
(signed)
Sales Manager

Letters to dealers.—Dealers, considered only in their capacity of business men, and not as consumers, are chiefly concerned with profits. They are interested in quick turnover rather than in quality.

Tangible proof of the seller's coöperation in moving goods from the shelves or sales rooms establishes conviction. Action can be stimulated by the offer of special inducements.

The physical make-up must be attractive and colorful, but businesslike. The language is colloquial and even crisp. The tone is spirited when the nature of the goods allows—seldom is the style slow-moving and dignified as in letters to professionals and farmers. The letter to dealers as business men is always short—rarely over one page.

Novel inclosures help to focus attention and arouse desire.

Gentlemen:

Our fall advertising campaign is well under way.

The tremendous campaign started early this year has been enlarged.

We commenced with 36 newspapers in centrally located cities; 49 are now carrying large Barrett Ads.

In addition to the newspapers, 12 national mediums, including The Saturday Evening Post, Successful Farming and Wallace's Farmer, will regularly broadcast Barrett messages this fall.

The combined circulation of these newspapers and magazines during the fall is close to one hundred and fifty million. This means that at least 5 Barrett Ads are going into every home in the country.

Barrett Roofings will be closely tied up to the remodeling idea initiated by us. This can have only one result—more business for Barrett dealers. Many home owners in your locality are thinking of remodeling. They are live prospects for everything you handle. Show them the Barrett Book, "Better Homes from Old Houses." It will surely help increase your sales.

Your roofing stock should be in shape to take care of fall business. Prices are firm and we can honestly recommend the purchase of Barrett roofings at today's quotations.

Yours very truly,

The appeal to business men as consumers differs in various ways from the foregoing requirements. In physical make-up, language, and tone there is little difference between the standard single sales letters and the letter to the dealer as a consumer. The approach, however, must be straightforward and direct.

Whatever the dealer buys he is likely to look upon as an investment—in health for himself and his family, as in the purchase of an automobile; in wholesome recreation, as in the purchase of a radio or player piano; in larger opportunities for his family, as in the purchase of a home in a better locality; in efficiency (saving of time, effort, money), as in the purchase of a dictaphone or adding machine for the office or store; in pride, as in the installation of new shelves and show cases.

When the appeal to the business man as a consumer covers matters connected specifically with his business and the conduct of it, as in the last two items in the previous paragraph, the letter differs little, if at all, from the type illustrated by the Burroughs Adding Machine letter. Although the business man often has his dreams, and does, indeed, indulge them when his finances allow, he nevertheless looks upon his purchases in the light of an investment. The appeal to profit, therefore, is always strong, whether the profit is in actual cash or in satisfactions more intangible.

Green Rock Sand Company,
900 Maple Avenue,
Green Rock, N. J.

Gentlemen:

Perhaps you have often felt that you would like to own an adding machine, but have hesitated because you were not sure it would pay you a profit.

How would you like to use a Burroughs Adding Machine for 15 days, absolutely free? Here's a real opportunity to see what an adding machine will do for you, and it won't cost you a cent to find out.

We believe it is worth while for us to let you try a machine on this basis. We think that this machine will help you save money and make money, and that you will discover the truth of what we say within 15 days.

If, at the end of the 15 days, you decide that you do not want this machine, we shall take it away as cheerfully as we brought it in.

If, however, at the end of that time you want to keep the machine, pay us $15.50 down, and we'll arrange the balance in easy monthly payments. The total cash price is only $125.

Don't miss this opportunity. Simply mail the inclosed post card and we'll have a new Burroughs machine delivered to your place of business. Remember, you will be under no obligation whatsoever.

Yours very truly,
(signed)
General Sales Manager

Letters to professionals.—The professional ranks include actors, artists, musicians, lawyers, doctors, ministers, teachers. Lawyers, ministers, and teachers often hold executive positions or perform many of the duties of executives. Unless, however, their work is exclusively, or almost exclusively, executive, the appeal that touches them is in essentials the one used with professionals.

Basically, the appeal to professionals is much like that to women. The instinct for orderliness and beauty is strong. The emotional appeal can be made very effective when it is judiciously combined with substantiated facts. Professionals are accustomed to weighing evidence. They have the ability to arrive at conclusions independently. Though their final decision may be guided and directed by the letter, the appeal

should be so phrased as to seem to allow complete independence of decision.

The letter should never be more than moderately long—not more than a page and a half at the utmost. It is well, in fact, to limit the letter to one page, leaving the bulk of the evidence to inclosures. The language is always conventionally correct, and the tone is never familiar. Above all, to receive attention, the letter must appear absolutely individual. A perfect match of ribbons for the fill-in is indispensable.

Most often the standard business-sheet is best, but for the sale of certain articles with an æsthetic or cultural appeal, social stationery is advisable. While the former may be sent to the business address, the latter should always be sent to the home.

The letter may contain a purely professional appeal, particularly in selling artists' materials, musical accessories, actors' stage requirements, instruments and office supplies for doctors and dentists, and professional publications like reference books and magazines for doctors, lawyers, ministers, and teachers. Such letters are designed to satisfy vocational needs. The tone should be dignified but businesslike.

Dear Doctor Babthorne:

Could such men as Bruce Barton, Ernest Elmo Calkins, and Charles Austin Bates help you in planning your class work this autumn?

Would it aid your students if you were able to bring to them the advertising experiences of John Lee Mahin, Robert R. Updegraff, Floyd Parsons, and William R. Bassett?

These men are some of the advertising and marketing authorities who will write for "The Advertising Fortnightly" this autumn. Their articles lend themselves admirably to class work because they interpret the principles and policies behind successful advertising campaigns.

"The Advertising Fortnightly" will keep you informed of the most significant developments in contemporary advertising practice—a whole year for $2.

If you mail the inclosed card now, you will be in time for the important autumn issues.

Cordially yours,

When, however, the appeal is to the professional's personal interests, the approach is identical with that of letters directed to educated and cultivated people generally.

Dear Sir:

We are very anxious to interest you as a faculty member in the special low cost tours to Europe this summer on United States Lines ships. These tours offer a special appeal to faculty members, students, and other persons interested in the educational and cultural advantages of a trip to Europe. The tours are particularly inviting because they involve the new American idea of going abroad at a low cost in third class cabins of the United States Lines ships, on which special exclusive accommodations have been set aside for people of intelligence and culture.

The accommodations insure comfort and convenience. Your traveling companions will be Americans of the best type.

The inclosed descriptive material indicates the possibilities of pleasurable travel at economy rates. Note also the dates of sailing.

If you are interested, please write me and mark your reply "personal."

Yours very truly,
(signed)
Passenger Traffic Manager

Letters to composite classes.—The foregoing divisions are practical when the nature of the product is such as to permit the choice of an appeal suited definitely to one or the other of these divisions. Frequently the class appeal cannot be determined by reference to sex or to occupational needs and interests. There are times when the sales appeal must be directed to a class made up of individuals drawn from all or most of these divisions. When, therefore, the classification cuts across the foregoing divisions, the writer must make a cross-section of society in order to study the temper of the prospects to whom the letter is mailed.

If, for example, the writer is circulation manager of a magazine read by people with different professional and occupational interests, he must study the mental and emotional characteristics of typical subscribers. One kind of magazine may appeal almost exclusively to conservative, sedate, well-bred people individually capable of independent thought. At the other extreme may be found the magazine making its appeal almost wholly to fashionable people who are only superficially, if at all, interested in ideas, and to whom serious discussion of modern problems is not congenial, if not dis-

agreeable. When a serious thought is unavoidable, they touch it only lightly and ironically. Because the interests of this gilded class are usually material, these people prefer to take their thoughts ready-made. Glittering generalizations, if stated with glib assurance, are accepted spontaneously at their face value.

The writer must employ a conservative tone at one extreme, but a breezy tone is required at the opposite extreme. Between these two are gradations of tones suitable according to the nature of the audience addressed. It is necessary to decide, then, whether the tone of the appeal is to be sedate, conservative, progressive, colloquial, jaunty, or breezy. Simplicity, however, is always the keynote, whatever the tone level.

The conservative tone.—Observe the conservative tone in the following good class appeal. The clientele of the *Atlantic Monthly* is successfully visualized. The letter was typed on paper of excellent quality. Before the letter was typed, a sheet measuring eight by ten inches was folded to five by eight inches to secure the effect of social stationery, with its suggestion of the personal approach. The imaginatively phrased, concrete message harmonizes well with the conservative tone of the letter as a whole. In this respect the letter illustrates how a conservative message can be made vivid without resorting to snappy phrases. The student should observe also how the material of every sentence is chosen to fit the needs of the special class, and how the diction and the long sentences are keyed to create an atmosphere of restraint and the desired effect of solidity.

My dear Sir:

A rather revealing incident was related to me late this summer. It speaks again of the close bond which, even in cosmopolitan New York, seems to encircle all "Atlantic" readers, whether they have been properly introduced or not.

Walking along Fifth Avenue at a brisk rate, a very personable young man was stopped by a breathless lady who eagerly said to him: "Oh, please excuse me, but do tell me, where did you get it? I have been everywhere, but I cannot secure a copy, and I must have it for that Cabot article."

As the lady's eyes greedily rested on a copy of the "Atlantic" which our young friend carried under his arm, it did not take him long to guess to what she referred, and it was with regret that he had to tell her that, alas, it was not the current, but a back number he was carrying.

That this is not an isolated case seems to be proved by the stream of letters in which our good friends tell us of the added pleasure they have had on their travels, meeting delightful companions whose sole introduction in many cases has been a copy of the orange-covered magazine.

Congratulations have often been extended to "The Atlantic Monthly" on its distinguished line of editors, beginning with James Russell Lowell—on the active part it has been allowed to play in the literature, science, art, and politics of our country—on its world-famous department, The Great War, succeeded by that of The New World. But nothing means so much to us as the current of friendship which seems to be so happily set in motion, once the "Atlantic" habit is formed.

But don't think the "Atlantic" group is a "glad" one, simply echoing one another's opinions. Far from it. You are as likely as not to disagree with every word in the leading article. But you will find in it something to think about—and an urge to discuss it with somebody. After all, doesn't intelligent discussion provide a great deal of the zest of life?

We have an idea that you would like the "Atlantic Monthly." Why not try it for the coming year? You will note that if you wish to give it to a friend at the same time—and Christmas isn't so far away, after all—you may enjoy a special rate.

Cordially yours,
(signed)
Circulation Manager

The buoyant tone.—In the following letter the tone is that of adventurous youth. Far from being snappy, the style nevertheless is lively and progressive, rather than, as in the foregoing letter, staid and sedate. If the foregoing letter has dignity, the following has poise, the poise of self-respecting youth. The tone is that of buoyant and zestful younger men and women whose interests are in the finer ideals of life and living. The material (love stories), the diction ("bravely outspoken," "immodest little circular," "cocktails and slang"), and the shorter sentences suggest the livelier appeal to a thinking minority.

Dear Reader:

How would you edit a magazine?

Under the guidance of young men, *The Forum* is taking the point of view of the younger generation. Youth often discovers that the new is best, only to find that the old is even better.

Youth, however, demands the right of frank and free discussion in order to arrive at the truth. To this end *The Forum* provides stimulating debates, a rostrum, and a symposium for its readers, and brief, pointed essays, in readable style, that furnish ammunition for intelligent conversation. Nor do we scorn poetry and fiction.

Of sex novels in these days there are many. Of love stories, few. For a serial to begin in the October *Forum,* we have selected the latest novel of the youngest member of a literary family, Major Arthur Hamilton Gibbs, brother of Sir Philip Gibbs and Cosmo Hamilton.

It is the love story of a young English country girl, frankly discussing the problems of the younger generation in a way bravely outspoken, yet in the finest sense, reticent. "Soundings" is picturesque and vital, but for the flavor of cocktails and slang it substitutes a flavor of loyalty and out-of-doors.

The editor solicits your friendly interest in *The Forum.* Will you read it for a year or for the shorter period set forth by the circulation manager in his immodest little circular? And will you become a contributor? Only with your assistance can we hope to make *The Forum* the "guide, philosopher, and friend" of America's thinking minority.

Yours very sincerely,
(signed)
Editor

The sprightly tone.—*The Living Age* letter, which follows, is conceived and executed in an accelerated tempo. The method of rapid-fire summarizing carries the reader along almost breathlessly. Like the magazine it aims to sell, the letter makes a lively, sprightly survey of the prospect's interests. In keeping with the tempo, the language is informal: "keep up with," "want," "care for." The tone tends toward the colloquial, but without loss of dignity.

Dear Sir:

If you think the world is larger than your parish, this letter has reached the right man.

If you would keep up with the newest plays in Paris, the literary gossip of London, the talk of the Continent;

If you want to know the difference between rumor and fact about Russia and Germany, the truth about France and England;

If you care for news from China and Japan, from India and the Argentine;

If, in short, you want to talk intelligently or to listen with discretion;

Then, here is the magazine for you.

From every large city in every civilized country the leading newspapers and magazines come to the offices of *The Living Age*. There the editors select, translate, and reprint the best material they can find—political articles, short stories, poems and book reviews.

With *The Living Age* on your table you will be kept up to the mark on foreign affairs every week in the year.

Are your tastes of a literary order?

You will look forward especially to the first week of each month when *The Living Age* will be enlarged into a literary review with longer articles than we have space for in our usual issues. This new feature is completely described in the inclosed circular.

Here we wish to make only one point more—and it is of an extremely practical nature.

At the bottom of this page there is a coupon. It quotes you the generous rate of Seven Months for Two Dollars—the regular price is Five Dollars a year. Fill out and send it to us with your remittance, and you will find yourself looking at the world with a more understanding, a more interested eye.

Sincerely yours,

The jaunty tone.—The foregoing letters show reticence, but not so the following one, which is written on a distinctly different tone level. The jaunty tone of self-assurance is reflected from such a word as "genuine" in the first sentence. A breezy air emanates from a sentence like the second, with its carelessly inaccurate "yours for the asking." The tone of extravagance is sounded in the grandiloquent "those who have knowledge, judgment, taste," and in the comprehensively superlative "most interesting, valuable, and thoroughly enjoyable." The reader of this letter is not asked to think deeply. Discriminating thought is not demanded. The letter flatters the reader's vanity. It offers him a desirable premium as bait for a subscription. The free and easy attitude is colloquially phrased in "you have ever come across."

Dear Friend:

Because we have been told that you are a lover of good books, and that you have a keen interest in the *genuine* literature of the day, we have made a special arrangement in your behalf with Messrs. Boni and Liveright, publishers of "The Modern Library."

Two good books—perhaps two you have wanted to read for years—are now yours for the asking.

The Smart Set is edited for the discriminating few—those who have knowledge, judgment, and taste. We can safely assure you that you will find *The Smart Set* one of the most interesting, valuable, and thoroughly enjoyable magazines you have ever come across. In fact, we do give you just that assurance, to the extent of guaranteeing to refund the subscription price to you (read the coupon carefully) if we are wrong.

Please give the succeeding pages a minute of your time, as a favor to yourself and to us.

Very sincerely yours,
(signed)
(signed)
Editors

The juvenile tone.—Like juvenile stories, letters to children are difficult to write well. Adaptation to the child mind is, however, well illustrated in the physical make-up, structure, tone, and language of the *St. Nicholas* letter which follows. The letter is multigraphed on a standard eight by eleven sheet. The text is bordered on all sides by nine delicately colored lithographs picturing childhood activities.

While it is not literally true that the message is phrased in words of two syllables, the diction is well adapted to produce the effect of simplicity. The quiet tone is dignified but natural, and the appeal to child motives and instincts is in harmony with the child's point of view.

Dear Reader:

You are among the fortunate boys and girls who receive *St. Nicholas* every month. You know that many of your friends like to borrow your copy, or that they have to wait in line at the public library to read the interesting stories and departments that just pack every issue of *St. Nicholas*.

Each month, hundreds of our friends write in and tell us how much *St. Nicholas* means to them.

Wouldn't you like to earn the equivalent of $4.00 for yourself and at the same time bring a great deal of happiness to two of your best friends?

If you will secure two yearly subscriptions to *St. Nicholas,* either new or renewal, at the regular price of four dollars a year, we shall extend your own subscription for twelve months absolutely free.

Of course, you already know of at least two boys and girls who would like very much to have their own copies of *St. Nicholas* every month. Just think how much fun you will all have talking about the various stories and features. And don't forget—there will be an interesting and helpful radio department each month beginning with the May number.

When you have secured the two yearly subscriptions, send us the $8.00 (check or money order) in the inclosed envelope with the order-blanks properly filled in.

You will be very happy in knowing that you are bringing so many pleasant and worth-while hours to your friends, and at the same time you are earning a $4.00 subscription for yourself.

Sincerely yours,

P.S.—If you send only one yearly subscription, we shall extend your own subscription for four additional months. These four copies would cost you $1.40 on the news stands.

The tone of simplicity.—Tone qualities, however, are not limited to letters dealing with books or literary subjects. Every letter, whatever the nature of the product it sells, can be improved in effectiveness through consideration of the tone level most appropriate to the corethought. The following example illustrates how well tone qualities can be utilized in a selling appeal directed chiefly to engineers and mechanics.

On the letter sheet, just above the text, is a clear picture of the Hyatt Roller Bearing Company's lineshaft box. The two parts of the shaft, upper and lower, are being held apart to show the interior of the lineshaft box. Diction, sentence structure, and sentence length suggest the simplicity of design the writer aims to impress upon the reader. The style is in complete harmony with the subject-matter and the purpose of the writing.

Dear Sir:

You can't beat the Hyatt lineshaft box for simplicity.

Look at this box. See how easy it is to assemble,

You will notice that the box is split. First you put the upper half of the box on the shaft, and then slide the lower half into place. Then they are screwed together.

The rollers operate on the shaft. There are no collars, no bushings. There is nothing to give trouble.

It is the simplicity that makes the Hyatt lineshaft box trouble-proof. Oil is needed only once in every four months. Its rugged simplicity insures you against wear and delays in production.

We have a book of information for you. Its number is 130. Send for it today.

Sincerely yours,

Conclusion.—It is well to remember that the sales letter directed to special classes is structurally the same as the sales letter no matter to whom directed. The appeals, too, are fundamentally the same—quality, price, and satisfaction providing the basis for all sales letters. These remain constant, however variable other appeals may be in the process of adaptation and adjustment to special classes.

Exercises.

I. Exercises for Oral and Written Anaylsis.

1. In a sentence for each, state the corethought of the letters on pages 218, 223, 227, 228, 229, 232, 236.

2. What appeal is incorporated in the following sentences? To what class is the appeal made?

(1) This article is the third in a series of critical essays on our colleges and universities. They will appear every month in *The Smart Set* under the general title, "The Higher Learning in America." While the Columbia article will naturally be of greater interest to you than those that follow, we are sure you will employ every one of them.

(2) A Handel lamp is a graceful and charming thing by day, but at night, glowing with myriad tones and mellow hues, it becomes an object of rarest beauty. The exquisite artistry of Handel craftsmanship leaps up to greet you in all its matchless charm.

3. "Women can no more help liking feminine appeals than men can reject the masculine appeal of *virile, manly, red-blooded, strong, powerful.* Yet these are all as overworked as *dainty, alluring,* and *charming.*" ——Do you agree?

4. "Let a rosy light of dreams create desire," writes one woman. "It will be a relief to be talked to in brass-tack terms," writes another woman. ——Are both correct? Why is the short-circuit appeal as necessary as the reason-why appeal?

5. What produces the cheerful atmosphere? What is the appeal?

Monday has been a blue, tortuous day of boilings, rubbings, scrubbings, rinsings, bluings, and hangings-out-to-dry ever since Adam hung "To Let" on Eden, until along came a pioneer that turned Blue Monday into a brilliant, glistering white. The washer that gently eases the dirt out of soiled raiment has the pleasant name of "La France."

6. Study the letters on pages 257, 261 as examples of the class appeal.

II. Letters for Criticism and Revision.

(1)

Dear Madam:

Blue Monday is gone forever. Why?

Because at last the housewife's problem is solved. She no longer need look forward to Monday with dread.

Gone are the old-fashioned wash boilers, the clumsy tubs, the back-breaking wash-boards over which our mothers had to toil. In their place stands a neat, trim, modern Savage Washing and Drying Machine.

All you do is to put the clothes into the perforated, cylindrical basin, press the button, and presto, the work is done. The water is gently forced through every inch of the fabric, removing every particle of dirt.

The drying is just as simple. Adjust the basin, press the button, and whizz, round it goes, throwing off the superfluous water through the perforations. In one minute the clothes are ready to hang on the line. Sounds like a fairy tale, does it not? The clothes are as sweet and clean as if a fairy had waved her magic wand and commanded, "Dirt be gone." No wringer is used.

We give a demonstration in your own home, without obligation to you. The machine is simplicity itself, as the inclosed booklet shows.

Simply sign and mail the inclosed card now. Our delivery man will leave a machine on trial.

Yours truly,

Is the foregoing letter clear? Why not? Are the last three paragraphs properly arranged to make an effective close? Will the appeal be more effective if the writer limits himself to the emotional appeal in the letter, leaving the reason-why for the folder?

(2)

Dear Sir:

The signature on this letter has been produced by a "Wet Ink" method.

The machine used is one designed especially for us. With it we can give you the kind of signatures you have been wanting for a long time.

Not until our "Wet Ink" method was perfected were we able to get a real signature.

The signature is extremely important. Why not let us handle your next order?

Very truly yours,
Sampson and Murdock,
List and Letter Service Dept.

To what class was the last letter directed?

(3)

Dear Sir:

The Sun Oil Company saves $3,935.88 yearly with Thermolith, the all-temperature fire cement.

A survey made by a firm of independent engineers proves conclusively that Thermolith reduces boiler maintenance costs at the Marcus Hook, Pa., plant to the extent of $3,935.88 each year.

Previously, when fire clay was used, it was necessary to reline the fire boxes in five boilers twice a year. With Thermolith the fire boxes are relined but once a year.

Thermolith effects a further saving in overhead costs by reducing the time each boiler is "off the line" for relining, from 32 days each year to only 14 days.

The total saving exceeds 18 times the cost of the Thermolith used, a striking example of the economy with which this material is used in hundreds of industries today.

Write us for a copy of the guaranteed survey which describes in detail the service of Thermolith in the Sun Oil Company Plant—there is no obligation.

Yours truly,

The last letter is directed to executives, plant managers, superintendents, and the like, who are interested in reducing maintenance costs. Is the beginning strong in its appeal to this type of reader? What is the purpose of the writer? What talking points are used? Are these grouped effectively about the corethought? What type of evidence is used? Rewrite the urge.

(4)

Dear Sir:

Do you remember the midnight "bicker" sessions of your undergraduate days? The affairs of the world were pretty well settled in those informal gatherings. There was wit and information a-plenty. Active minds made conversation interesting.

Send your mind adventuring again. *The Forum* is today making people think and talk. It is the meeting place of creative minds in every field of human endeavor.

Without attempting to be clever, *The Forum* manages to be entertaining.

Will you let *The Forum* help you keep pace?

Very sincerely yours,

(5)

Dear Doctor:

We have rather consistently avoided soliciting your business in your office. We know how valuable your time is.

We suggest that you visit our salesrooms, where you can at your leisure investigate, examine, and have demonstrated any of the comprehensive line of instruments and apparatus we have in stock.

About a year ago we established connections with Carl Reiner of Vienna, becoming his sole American representative. We now have many of his instruments in stock. Others are being received daily.

This famous line of instruments is worthy of your special attention.

Reiner instruments are particularly low-priced at present.

May we invite you to visit our sales rooms, located near the medical center of New York?

Yours truly,
The Surgical Instruments Company
(signed)

(6)

Dear Mrs. Babthorne:

Last week we sent you one of our booklets describing and picturing our Palisade Police Dogs.

Our dogs are sometimes called one-man dogs. That does not literally mean one man. It rather means that while the dog is most loyal and affectionate to those whom he knows (all the members of the household), he does not expect nor want attention from strangers, and consequently ignores them.

In disposition, the police dog is kind and lovable. He enjoys being petted and is quite demonstrative in showing his love for his master and mistress, and especially for the children. One of our customers writes: "We are all devoted to Vigo and he to us. He is over a year old now and is very good-natured, especially with baby. He lets her pull his ears. She walks on him and mauls him generally. He takes her hand or foot in his big mouth but never hurts her."

The gentle disposition of the police dog and his loyalty make him an ideal playmate for your children. His strength and courage fit him admirably as a guard and protector. He is fun for the kiddies. His intelligence and understanding of your moods make him a splendid pal for you. His distinguished appearance makes him the pride of the household.

Our catalogue tells you of the beautiful appearance of this kind of dog.

Make your reservations now. Make sure of a good selection while we have a good supply in our kennels, and order now.

Sincerely yours,

(7)

Dear Sir:

If more than 25,000 grocers in the United States have increased their business from ten to twenty per cent,

And if they have done this at a total cost so small that they scarcely minded the outlay,

You would like to know how they did it, wouldn't you?

They installed the Shuman System of Price-Marking.

Try price-marking your goods the Shuman way and see how quickly your customers take notice—how favorably they comment on it—how they appreciate the convenience of shopping without having to ask the price of everything they buy.

Be modern—Shumanize your store, as pictured on the inside pages of this letter. Think of the time it saves your clerks in answering questions, and how you avoid making mistakes.

We can give you the facts about increases in trade. Shubert Brothers, on West Avenue, Chicago, doing a business of $150,000 a year, say that the Shuman Price Stickers increased trade from the first day they were up.

There is no reason for losing time and money. You can buy a complete outfit of 150 galvanized clamps and 1410 Price Stickers at $5.75—extra clamps at $2.50 the 100, and extra stickers of 50 of a kind at ten cents the envelope.

Send in your order on the inclosed blank—now. Do not delay the accelerando on your cash register. Order now.

Yours truly,

(8)

My dear Charles:

We are very glad to have your letter of the tenth.

We will send you trial sheets of our postage stamps as soon as you return the inclosed card.

Just show the card to your father and have him sign it.
Then send it back to us.

Most of our boys are a little older than you, so we were pleasantly surprised to find a boy of your age who is so ambitious. Our stamps are of such good value that you will not have any trouble selling them to your friends.

Send the card back to us as soon as you can, and you will get the trial sheets by return mail.

Very truly yours,

7. Criticize the following letters to retail merchants These letters were used in connection with advertisements intended to stimulate inquiries, the letters being sent in response to inquiries.

(a)

Dear Sir:

Your inquiry dated November 5 is appreciated, you may be sure.

Inclosed is a booklet giving complete information about our tags and labels, in which you will also find some actual samples of our work. Under separate cover we are sending you a small can of Dennison Glue.

If any of the samples particularly appeal to you, just send them in and we shall gladly quote prices. Or if you say so, we will make a sketch of a tag or label for you. Our doing so does not obligate you in the least. You undoubtedly have some ideas and suggestions as to design and color combination that you would want incorporated in your tags. Just let us have them. Our artists are at your service.

Practical and laboratory tests continually prove that Dennison's Glue is the strongest cold liquid glue made. When once tried it is, therefore, demanded by workers in factories or shops where quick and permanent adhesion is required. Test the glue which we are sending you. We are confident that you will find all we say is correct.

We hope we shall have the pleasure of hearing from you again soon.

Sincerely yours,

(b)

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your inquiry of ——— showing interest in Barreled Sunlight. By parcel post we are sending you a sample.

Try Barreled Sunlight out in comparison to any other paint or enamel and you can well believe that your customers will like it because it is easy to apply—it is the whitest white and most permanent gloss imaginable—and because of this opacity it is possible to do with one coat what would ordinarily require two coats of enamel.

Made by our exclusive "Rice Process" (no varnish) Barreled Sunlight will not show brush marks or laps. It gives a finish that is smooth, white, washable—easy to keep clean and retailing for less than the price of enamel. Your profit, figured on the enclosed cards, averages over ——— per cent based on your cost, about ——— and ——— per cent based on your selling price.

Extensively advertised in (two well known household magazines) and other national mediums, dealers report that Barreled Sunlight is the quickest turning article in the store. To direct prospects to your store, we co-operate with unique sales helps—movie slides, newspaper advertising on a ——— basis, and a window trim including flasher run by electricity.

We are asking our distributors ——— of ——— to get in touch with you if the opportunity is open for a new Barreled Sunlight account in your locality.

(c) The Westcott Rule Company uses a merchandise item, a sample yardstick, to send to dealers who respond to trade-journal advertisements.

Dear Sir:

We have mailed you under separate cover a sample Westcott yardstick. You will notice that this stick is very nicely finished, accurate and durable. You will be surprised to know that it retails as low as ———.

Your profit on this style when bought by the gross is ——— per cent on your investment.

Other styles from ——— to ——— are described in full in circular. This circular gives you the Westcott proposition in a nutshell. The plan itself is an old one; as applied to yardsticks it is entirely new. It is not necessary for us to write a treatise to get our thought across to you. It is simply this: There are many household articles not half so *necessary* as a yardstick, for which national demand has been created and, in which a rapid turnover has resulted. The same thing can be done with yardsticks.

In fact, it is being done. Many dealers who have taken on Westcott sticks report an amazing rapidity of turnover. We want you to get behind Westcott yardsticks. There is a bigger field here than you may think.

Very truly yours,

(d) The Hooper Sons Manufacturing Company used the following letter in connection with requested samples of sash cord.

Dear Sir:

Due to the increase in practically every line of business you will soon be called on to supply an unlimited demand for quality sash cords. We urge that you anticipate your requirements for whatever you may need up to April 15, 1925, so that you will be protected against any further advance in the prices of raw cotton.

Our cords are sold on a strictly net weight basis and are packed twelve dozen hanks to the bale. On bale lots we are pleased to quote subject to immediate change without notice as follows:

PARKDALE	STERLING
(weights and prices)	(weights and prices)

A liberal order placed at this time will undoubtedly prove to your advantage. Order one or more bales today.

Very truly yours,

III. Problems in Writing Letters Making a Class Appeal.

1. The following letter was sent out by the subscription department of The Readers' Digest Asssociation, 50 Broad

Street, New York, N. Y. The letter was sent out under a two cent stamp, with inclosures of testimonials, coin card (25 cents for a sample copy), and a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Dear Friend:

Suppose you accepted an offer of thirty popular magazines to be delivered to you each month for the price of one transient magazine. Think what a tremendous task it would be to wade through hundreds of pages of reading matter and advertising, in order to find the worthwhile articles. How many of these articles would you find time to read?

Suppose a staff of editors selected thirty-one of the most important and interesting articles (such articles as one talks about and wishes to remember) and to save further time condensed them and served them up to you in crisp, intelligent form.

What would you pay for such a service?

The Readers' Digest Association offers you this service for twenty-five cents a month, less than one cent a day.

In twelve months The Readers' Digest gives you 372 "feature" articles of the year. In what other way could you keep your information account open so easily—and inexpensively?

Discover for yourself what this magazine will mean to you by returning the inclosed subscription blank.

Yours very truly,

Is the appeal to the reader's interest specific? Does the reader know precisely what type of article is used in the *Digest?* Is the range of selections indicated? What kind of evidence (the inclosed testimonials are vague) is used to convince? Is it definite enough to make him visualize a magazine he has never seen?

Write a letter to a classified mailing list that cuts across occupational classifications. You might appeal to those who desire to keep abreast of the times in magazine fiction, or in scientific research in so far as it has a popular significance and appeal; in medicine, surgery, electrical appliances, radio, aëronautics, mechanical appliances, biology, chemistry, food, dietetics, health; in educational articles for thousands upon thousands of teachers, and for parents interested in schools and colleges because of their children or for other reasons; in

business literature from many sources for progressive business men and executives.

Write the letter, using the basic idea of the foregoing letter, but focusing your appeal on a composite class with common interests. Describe the kind and number of inclosures you plan to use with the letter. Would a specimen table of contents, reprinted from your latest issue, be helpful?

2. Assume that you are manager of a hotel in Atlantic City. Write a letter to former women patrons of your hotel, informing them that you have added a nursery and play room, both fully equipped and staffed. Show your interest in the children of the family. The policy of the hotel is to cater to children as well as to their parents. Sound-deadened floors and walls permit noise and romping. Mothers will appreciate the genuine welcome extended to children. High-walled playground for supervised play on the roof. Special provision for their children's entertainment. Recreation facilities complete. Surf bathing from the hotel, each child guided by an individual nurse, for a small additional fee.

This letter is to mothers. Adapt the subject-matter and style to their point of view. You are writing to well-to-do people, but not to wealthy mothers.

3. Write a sales letter to hotel men, stimulating inquiries about Wamsutta Percale sheets and pillow cases.

Wamsutta Percale sheets and pillow cases are made of the highest grade of fine cotton. They are at the same time delicate and fine in texture and strong and durable. When Professor E. B. Millard of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology made his famous laundry test of twenty-four leading brands of sheets and pillow cases, he found Wamsutta Percale stronger than any other sheet, after 160 washings in a commercial laundry. Such durability, woven into the fine but firm texture of Wamsutta Percale (which becomes more handsome with frequent launderings), represents a combination unequaled. To strengthen Wamsutta Percale, a new tape selvedge has been added. The ordinary selvedge, if examined under a microscope (see the inclosure with illustration), shows irregular lines and skip stitches. For this reason ordinary towels lack strength to endure the hard wear given hotel linen. Wamsutta Percale Tape Selvedge reënforces, a fact which prevents tearing. Hotel men appreciate the great economy of

these long-wearing luxurious sheets and pillow cases. Steadily increasing orders prove this. Leading hotels, inns, and clubs provide them for their guests. List of references? Inclose samples, or send these only to hotel men who inquire in response to your letter? Are you writing to consumers?

Use as many of the foregoing data as you find relevant. Add whatever points seem essential to make a compelling appeal.

4. Write a letter to farmers, selling them a tractor, a cream separator, a milking machine, an electric refrigerating plant, a harvesting machine, or some other farm implement. You can find relevant material in advertisements in farm magazines. With the letter, hand in a sheet describing the complete mailing, as to inclosures (number, kind, material contained), kind of postage, and so forth.

5. Rewrite the following letters, making them more effective in as many ways as you can.

(1)

Dear Sir:

Flunk? You'll never flunk—not on the stiffest kind of a grade, if you're driving the Earl Custom Roadster.

Here is a custom-built car that is a regular fellow—a good sport—a dependable pal—a fast friend.

A Charlie Paddock for speed, pep, and endurance—ace-high with the ladies: that's the Earl Custom Roadster.

Its husky, long-stroke motor gives you right of way—right away—and you're sitting pretty over the roughest roads.

A wide choice of color in paint and upholstery. Five wire wheels, one-piece windshield, marine-type cowl ventilators, parking lights on fenders, a luggage compartment with ample room for golf clubs and week-end kit-bags.

Before you buy a car, see the Earl Custom Roadster. Ride in it. Drive it.—And ask the "governor" to "step out" with you.

Very truly yours,

(2)

Dear Doctor:

The first successful attempt to supply the profession with a concentrated liquid magnesia, free from the many disadvantages that attend the use

of magnesia in its solid form, was through the invention of Phillips' Milk of Magnesia, over half a century ago.

Phillips' is the original and has set the standard for Milk of Magnesia, so we may be permitted to suggest, that when Milk of Magnesia is prescribed, you will be sure to specify Phillips', as imitations are often ineffective.

Be good enough to fill out and mail the inclosed card, if samples are desired.

Faithfully yours,

(3)

Dear Doctor Burton:

The courteous interview you recently extended our representative is greatly appreciated by us. We hope that you were compensated for the time given the interview by learning something useful to you concerning our products.

We trust that you will feel free to command us for such pharmaceutical information as you may think we can supply. We assure you that we should like to have you consider us at your service in this respect.

The inclosed circular matter will, we hope, be of interest to you.

Very truly yours,

(4)

Gentlemen:

If yours is the problem of getting more customers into your store, we know that we can interest you.

We are after more business and want part of yours by deserving it.

Frankly, the "Club Clothes" line is a profit-maker, and in its price ranges it is second to none, for it compares on every point of fabric, tailoring, and style with the more costly nationally advertised makes. Repeat orders prove our profit claims and today over 1400 shrewd, progressive retailers throughout the country favor and feature "Club Clothes."

Why not let us prove what we say? If you haven't fully covered your wants for the spring, let us send you, for your examination, a set of suits which we wholesale at $19.50 to retail at $30, or a group at $22 retailing at $35.

The mere effort of returning the post card will bring these suits to you without the slightest obligation. Look them over carefully, giving them

the most critical inspection and we feel certain that you will quickly see the turnover and profit possibilities of the line.

Will you mail the card today?

Very truly yours,

(5)

Gentlemen:

Why not have a box that's different?

No necessity of going to a lot of expense for engravings when we have so many stock designs for your selection.

By all means look over the attached folder. It shows how other stores are getting real advertising value from their suit boxes.

Yours very truly,

(6)

Gentlemen:

Would you care if we sent you our new spring and summer line for examination?

We feel sure that you will like it immensely, for it is priced to rock bottom, and contains nothing but pure wool fabrics of the best quality.

Give us a show.

Sincerely yours,

Chapter VIII

FOLLOW-UP SALES LETTERS

When sales letters are used in series, they are called follow-up letters.

Uses of the follow-up series.—The follow-up series is employed (1) to follow up regular customers; (2) to follow up an occasional purchaser with the object of making him a regular customer; (3) to stimulate inquiries; (4) to follow up such inquiries; (5) to follow up a list of prospects with the object of selling through letters alone; and (6) to do pioneer work specifically planned to prepare the prospect for the visit of a salesman.

Repetition and variety in the follow-up series.—The principle underlying follow-up systems is that repetition wears down resistance and that variety of appeal keeps the prospect's interest fresh.

Repetition of the strongest selling points in letter after letter breaks down indifference. Variety in material and language arouses desire and establishes conviction. By presenting his product in various lights, the writer sooner or later hits upon an effective approach, and converts as many prospects as possible into buyers. The cumulative effect of skillful repetition and variety is almost irresistible when service, price, and quality are right.

Types of Follow-Up Series.

Three types are in common use: (1) the continuous series; (2) the wear-out series; (3) the campaign series.

The Continuous Series.

In the continuous series, letters are mailed at irregular intervals, season after season, and in the case of established customers, year after year. The units of this series are complete and independent of one another. Manufacturers, wholesalers,

jobbers, and retailers use timely follow-ups—monthly, seasonal, or annual—to develop good will and keep accounts active. Seasonal announcements appear in the form of persuasive sales appeals, and timely offerings are presented in ways that show the advisability of taking prompt action in stocking goods.

There is the ever-present danger that the style of the continuous follow-up will degenerate into that of matter-of-fact announcements. Even when the letter is in the nature of a trade bulletin, appealing material expressed in vital language should be chosen. Every unit in the continuous follow-up should be treated as a sales letter. The attention-getter is least important, for the letter is sent to customers who are interested, but the other qualities of the single sales letter should be incorporated.

(1) *A jogging letter from a publisher to a client.*

Advertising Manager,
Toilet Requisites,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

The hardship of handling a bunch of last-minute copy is known to every publisher. Some folks simply can't get out of the habit of waiting until the last bell has rung—and after.

Such delay means congestion in the composing room, hurried press work, poor printing.

How sweet life would be if all your copy reached you within a comfortable time limit! You've probably made that statement yourself hundreds of times.

We have the same problem in getting out the Lord and Thomas Pocket Directory. Some of our good friends who have been as regular as the sun in their patronage, year after year, are sometimes negligent in helping us with early copy. This does make a tough job at closing time.

This year I'm going to ask your co-operation. Send in your order now, with copy. If you want us to help you in the preparation, send a rough outline. We'll do the rest. But do not wait until "after the first of the year" or some other vague time. It will require no more effort to sign the order now and send in your copy, than it will a week before closing time.

Today is the best time for mailing the inclosed order.

Very truly yours,

(2)

Dear Mrs. Babenroth:

During the week beginning Monday, March 23, we are to have our Annual Spring Sale. This is to be an event covering every department in the store, and will offer special values in the newest and most-in-demand spring merchandise.

The little folder we are inclosing will tell you all about it, and with this we are extending to you, as one of our regular customers, a most cordial invitation to come and select the things you want on the three days before the sale; that is, on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, March 19, 20, and 21. These are our Courtesy Days and, upon your request, any salesperson will be glad to show or sell you the merchandise.

While you are in the store, you will also have an excellent opportunity of looking over the splendid assortments of new spring merchandise we have assembled. You will no doubt find such a visit exceedingly interesting in many ways.

We greatly appreciate your patronage, and hope you will find it convenient to come to the store on the Courtesy Days we have mentioned.

Sincerely yours,

President.

The Wear-out Series.

The object of each unit in the wear-out series is to make the sale or secure the desired response. The writer proceeds with the aim of making each letter bring as many returns as possible from the mailing list.

Length of the wear-out series.—The length of the wear-out series is not definitely planned. As long as the returns from letters are profitable, the company continues to use the mailing list. Each succeeding letter, by stressing a new talking point, or by restating the strongest sales appeal, brings in a profitable percentage of returns. When the small number of responses makes continued mailing unprofitable, the mailing list is worn out, and hence the name of the series.

The mailing list.—The wear-out series may be used to sell to any type of prospect. It includes letters to dealers and consumers. A local battery service station sends letters to owners of automobiles and radios, to induce them to have their batteries inspected, recharged, or repaired. A manufacturer of store fixtures uses letters to sell dealers his store

equipment. Mailing lists for these purposes may be purchased from agencies specializing in such lists. They may be compiled from trade directories, or trade journals, and from telephone directories. The more carefully the list is compiled, the greater will be the number of returns.

Timing the series.—The time interval between letters in the wear-out series may be short or long. Because each letter is designed to make the sale, the time between letters must be sufficiently long to permit a response, so that the next letter does not cross the prospect's response. It is important to remember this when mailings cover a large territory. When letters in the same mailing are sent to distant points as well as to neighboring cities, the distribution should be regionally planned. Thus, for example, a second letter mailed from New York to New England and Pennsylvania can be sent two or three days sooner than a letter to California. Allowance must be made for the fact that a response from the far West is days longer in transit than one from neighboring states.

Linking the wear-out series.—Opening sentences should be as carefully planned as in single sales letters. Even when the opening sentence refers to a preceding letter—as it well may to emphasize a previous appeal or to establish intimate contact by linking the present letter with past letters—care should be exercised to make the link material at the same time attention-clinching.

It is easy to spoil the tone of the whole letter if the opening is tactless or negative. The writer may be irritated because he has not received a response to previous letters, but the irritation must never be allowed to show. Negative openings antagonize the reader. The following opening sentences strike false notes.

Plaintive tone: Dear Sir: We have written you two letters, and cannot understand why you do not reply.

Blunt tone: Dear Madam: Didn't you receive our recent letter? Don't you appreciate the great saving our offer makes possible?

Example of wear-out follow-up letters.—The following wear-out series brought good results. Units were mailed at irregular intervals.

The series offers the student an excellent illustration of variety in appeals addressed to the same mailing list. The

list is, obviously, miscellaneous. Unity is maintained in the series by the fact that the appeal is based on the same book, but beyond this inevitable unifying element there is no connection between letters. Each letter is a complete and independent unit, its purpose being to sell the book to the class to which the appeal is directed. The resourcefulness of the sales manager is patent not only in the convincing variety of appeals he has discovered, but also in his ability to adapt each appeal to the class the letter aims specifically to reach. These letters are, therefore, at the same time good examples of the wear-out follow-up and of the class appeal.

The first letter is directed to real estate men, the central sales appeal being that the book has been adopted by The National Association of Real Estate Boards.

The second letter again appeals to real estate men, the central thought being that practical men prepared this book.

These two letters apparently exhausted the possibilities, for the time at least, of selling to real estate men.

The third letter, therefore, makes its appeal to lawyers, whose work often involves real estate problems. The core-thought is: *It took a lawyer to write this real estate book.* Indirectly the letter appeals again to real estate men.

The fourth letter, directed to bankers, whose trust and will departments handle real estate problems, stresses the value of the book to bankers. The letter is built around the appeal: *This is a banker's book on real estate.*

The fifth letter shows builders that they can use this book, the central thought being: *This is a book on real estate for the builder.*

The sixth letter appeals to architects. The book is presented in the light of the architect's interest in real estate problems. It is an architect's book not only because the architect is interested in real estate problems in general, but also because his specific problems have been discussed in a special chapter.

(1)

Dear Sir:

What an easy thing it would be if real estate could be bought and sold like collars. But real estate is complicated—every transaction involves many technicalities. The slightest slip, and immediately a future

advantage is lost. In recognition of these conditions, Philip A. Benson, former Secretary of the Realty Associates, and Nelson L. North, Jr., member of the New York Bar and lecturer on real estate, have written a manual—"Real Estate Principles and Practices."

The book is for real estate men who would use every legitimate effort to make each transaction profitable to their client and to themselves.

The National Association of Real Estate Boards in its endorsement says, " 'Real Estate Principles and Practices' is a most comprehensive manual of Real Estate Service, and its timely merit is recognized with appreciation."

In this manual, the authorities cover real estate sales, brokerage, and ownership completely. Liens, bonds, taxes, and titles are but a few of many subjects covered in this volume. It explains and illustrates with actual examples:

—ways to overcome difficulties in mortgage work.
—best methods of renting and managing properties.
—important, but seldom seen, details in title work.
—89 real estate forms—each the best of its kind.

As an indication of this book's value, 277 actual real estate problems are solved. One of these may be identical with some problem now troubling you. The book tabulates the things which interested parties should produce upon the closing of a title—17 for seller, 23 for buyer.

This five-dollar manual will be forwarded to you for five days' FREE EXAMINATION if you will mail the enclosed card. After the examination, you may either remit or return the book without any further obligation.

Yours very truly,

(2)

Dear Sir:

The National Association of Real Estate Boards has just officially endorsed the mighty practical book known as "Real Estate Principles and Practices." It was written by two experienced men, Philip Benson, Secretary of the Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn, former Secretary of the Realty Associates, and Nelson L. North, Jr., member of the New York Bar. In case you haven't seen the book as yet, I believe it will be of special interest to you for it is up-to-date, thorough, and practical.

It has a very thorough chapter on Bonds and Mortgages, which deals with the forms of bonds, the default clause, execution of bond, enforcement of bond, forms of mortgage, the lifting clause, and other special clauses, as well as special forms of mortgages.

The book clearly explains and illustrates the method of valuating real estate, taking into consideration both pre-war and present costs.

The chapter on Transfer and Examination of Title and Title Insurance is likewise full of helpful information, and the section devoted to Mortgage Loans compares them with other investments. It also discusses and illustrates the principle of sound mortgage lending.

In addition, the book reprints practically EVERY FORM used in real estate work—forms of contract for sale or exchange, deeds and mortgage forms, assignments, satisfaction pieces, and subordination agreements are shown and explained. All in all, this book is packed with an unusual amount of important data, presented clearly, logically, and interestingly.

The book must be a mighty good one if the National Association will endorse it. Its cost is only $5, and we shall be glad to send you a copy for five days' Free Examination if you will mail the enclosed stamped card. This will bring you the book without cost or obligation, promptly.

Yours very truly,

(3)

Dear Sir:

Real estate matters no doubt occupy a generous portion of your time.

As an attorney you probably are constantly dealing with questions involving the leasing, purchase, sale, and mortgaging of real estate. Can you look at these deals from the viewpoint of the real estate operator and the home-builder? Or do you consider only the legal side?

Possibly the legal side is the only one with which you are really concerned—but wouldn't a more complete acquaintance with other ways of looking at the situation be of help?

In "Real Estate Principles and Practices" we have published a book which covers the entire subject. Written by Nelson L. North, Jr., a member of the New York Bar, in collaboration with Philip A. Benson, former Secretary of the Realty Associates, it presents both the lawyer's views and those of the practical real estate man.

This book clearly explains methods of valuating real estate, title insurance, practical operations of the Torrens Law, and the principles back of sound mortgage lending. Practically every form ever used in real estate work is reproduced—contracts for sale or exchange, assignments, satisfaction pieces, subordination agreements, and so forth.

The National Association of Real Estate Boards has officially endorsed this helpful book. Lawyers all over the country have added it to their libraries and find it a most valuable reference work.

Its cost is only $5, and we shall be glad to send you a copy for five days'

Free Examination as soon as you return the enclosed stamped card. This will bring the book promptly—without cost or obligation.

Yours very truly,

(4)

Dear Sir:

Outside of the usual routine of the bank's own work, what business activity engages your attention most? Isn't it real estate? Don't you have to devote more time to problems involving the purchase, sale, and transfer of real estate and mortgages than to any other type of commercial transaction?

"Real Estate Principles and Practices," a book we have recently published, gives you a thorough insight into every branch of the business. Philip A. Benson, one of the authors, now Secretary of the Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn, was formerly Secretary of the Realty Associates.

He writes with a thorough understanding of the banker's attitude on the subjects in which he is most vitally concerned, but he is able to present the viewpoint of the real estate operator and the home-seeker as well. Nelson L. North, Jr., a well-known New York lawyer, has covered the legal side of the business in a clear, concise, straightforward manner.

> This book contains valuable pointers for the banker on Bonds and Mortgages, on the Valuation of Real Estate and the Management of Property. It is already in the libraries of many banks where its practical suggestions have been of the greatest aid to bank officers.

One particularly valuable feature is the reproduction of nearly a hundred forms used in realty work—liens, options, mortgages, deeds, acknowledgments, building loan agreements, and so forth. The National Association of Real Estate Boards has given its Official Endorsement to this book.

The book costs only $5, and we shall be glad to let you examine a copy without cost or obligation. The card enclosed, already stamped for your convenience, will bring a copy for five days' Free Examination. If you want to keep it, you may send your check. Otherwise you may return it without further obligation. The card will bring a copy by return mail.

Yours very truly,

(5)

Dear Sir:

Building operations are so closely allied with real estate transactions that it is sometimes hard to draw a dividing line. That's why you will

be interested in a book we have just published—"Real Estate Principles and Practices."

This book goes into every detail of the real estate business. It tells its story in a clear and straightforward manner. It is free from technicalities and cumbersome legal terms. The authors are Philip A. Benson, Secretary of the Dime Savings Bank in Brooklyn, formerly Secretary of the Realty Associates, and N. L. North, Jr., a New York lawyer who has an extensive realty practice.

The National Association of Real Estate Boards has officially endorsed this book. It is undoubtedly the most complete and thorough discussion of the subject ever written. It has helpful chapters on Brokerage, Management of Property, and on Bonds and Mortgages.

The chapter on liens by the builder and by sub-contractors will certainly interest you, for in no other place will you find this subject so competently covered in so little space. Contracts, leases, examination and closing of titles are fully described.

> In addition, every form and document that is used in real estate procedure is reprinted in a special section—nearly a hundred forms including liens, notices of liens, and subordination agreements.

We will send you this useful book, postpaid, for five days' Free Examination. Look it over yourself. If you want to keep it, you can remit the cost, $5, as payment in full. Otherwise you can return it Without Cost or Obligation. The enclosed stamped card will bring a copy (without cost or obligation to you) by return mail.

Yours very truly,

(6)

Dear Sir:

Because of your constant contact with the real estate field, you will be interested in a new book we have just published—"Real Estate Principles and Practices." The authors are Philip A. Benson, Secretary of the Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn, and formerly Secretary of the Realty Associates, and Nelson L. North, Jr., a New York lawyer with an extensive realty practice.

This book covers every angle of the real estate business in a clear, interesting manner, free from technicalities and cumbersome legal terms. You will find in its pages a full explanation of all the principles governing real estate transactions.

One chapter deals specifically with the work of the architect. Others explain Brokerage, Management of Property, Bonds and Mortgages. The National Association of Real Estate Boards has officially endorsed

this book and it is certainly the most comprehensive work on the subject ever prepared.

In order that you may see for yourself how helpful this book will be, we shall be glad to send it postpaid for five days' Free Examination. If you want to keep it, you can remit the cost, $5—otherwise you may return it Without Cost or Obligation. The enclosed stamped card will bring the book by return mail.

Yours very truly,

The Campaign Series.

The importance of plan.—The campaign follow-up is used mainly to market high-priced merchandise or service. It differs from the continuous and the wear-out series in being definitely planned and completely prepared in advance of the first mailing. The number of letters in the series, the time between mailings, and thus the total elapsed time, are determined in advance. In fact, in the campaign system the plan is at least as important as the individual letters. Each unit has its assigned place in a series leading with cumulative effect to a climax—the favorable response.

The number of letters in the campaign—The number of units in the campaign series is conditioned by the purpose of the campaign, the price of the article, the margin of profit, and the mailing list.

The purpose of the campaign.—Not all campaigns are designed to accomplish the same purpose. To distribute the letter material to the best advantage, the writer must know the goal of the campaign.

Is the purpose to stimulate inquiries? Then every detail should be focused to assure a maximum number of inquiries from desirable prospects.

Is the campaign to prepare the way for a salesman's call? Then the campaign must be shaped to assure the salesman a favorable hearing.

Is the campaign to sell direct by mail? The problem is to determine whether the article or service can be sold by letters alone, and if so, whether it can be sold profitably. If it can, the material must be pointed so that the letter can do the work of a salesman. It is, for example, not easy to sell life insurance direct by mail.

The price of the article.—The effective follow-up campaign demands expert knowledge, shrewd planning, and a substantial investment. It is important, therefore, to know at the outset whether the article or service can be marketed with a margin of profit that justifies the expenditure.

It probably would not be profitable to attempt a series of three or four one-page letters to sell a book costing three dollars or less.

A series of eight two-page letters, with attractive inclosures, is profitable in selling a set of books costing one hundred dollars.

To develop new business, a bank may use a series of three letters or a series of eight letters, the number depending upon the kind of business to be developed. A series of eight is too expensive if the aim is to interest parents in savings accounts for their children, where deposits are small. Such a series, however, is profitable in soliciting the accounts of business houses, or in developing business in the foreign department, where large accounts prevail.

When the article is new on the market, and therefore unfamiliar, or when the methods of marketing are unusual, the series needs to be long to overcome sales resistance. Most people, for example, buy life insurance through a local agent. If, therefore, the purpose is to sell life insurance direct by mail, with a distant city as a base, the campaign must be extended, not merely in the total number of units, but likewise in the length of the individual units, in order to win the confidence of prospects.

The mailing list.—A campaign carefully planned in other respects will fail if the mailing list has not received adequate attention. A good letter cannot be effective if the mailing list does not contain live prospects of the kind demanded by the purpose of the campaign. The list must be kept up to date.

Frequency of appeal has a direct bearing upon the success of the campaign. It is well known that a mailing list is valuable in proportion to the difficulty with which it is obtained. Thus it is not difficult to secure lists of dealers, physicians, engineers, teachers, and the like. Their names and addresses appear annually in mercantile directories, faculty lists, and membership lists of medical and engineering societies. Being

subject to frequent sales appeals from a wide variety of sources, these prospects are not likely to respond to a short series.

Perhaps the most valuable mailing list is the one based on inquiries made in response to some form of advertising. It is a mistake, however, to assume that every inquiry represents genuine interest, and that the buying impulse is strong in each instance. The value of an inquiry list depends upon the kind of advertising. Those inquiries, for instance, resulting from advertising directed exclusively to executives, or to housewives in a well-defined buying class, are more valuable than those produced by advertising not specifically directed to a restricted class whose need for the article is obvious. Nevertheless, the latter group contains a relatively high number of live prospects. Even with such a mailing list, the writer can proceed in the confidence that his letters will receive attention. Experience approves the sound judgment that the man who is interested enough to respond to an advertising lead is worth a long series of letters.

The length of campaign letters.—The class of prospects influences not only the number and kind, but also the length, of letters in the campaign follow-up. This is especially true when the mailing list is not based on inquiries solicited in advertisements. Upon the care with which the writer can adjust his appeal depends the success of the campaign, measured in terms of profits. To determine upon the suitable approach, he analyzes the mailing list. If he is to sell a check protector to a list of prosperous business men, who realize the need of check protectors, three or four crisp one-page letters are sufficient. If he is to sell a cream separator to farmers, where a longer series is necessary, for the farmer is slow in coming to a decision, a series of six or eight two-page letters is advisable. The amount of detailed evidence required for a given prospect determines the length of the units in the campaign series.

The structure of campaign letters.—In the campaign follow-up, each letter does not perform the four functions of the complete sales appeal. In the plan of the individual letter, great flexibility is allowed, with the possibility of many varied arrangements in the distribution of material. With regard for the four functions of the sales appeal, a typical series of six follow-up letters may be planned as follows. The first letter secures attention and arouses interest. The second and third

letters create desire. The fourth and fifth letters establish conviction. The sixth letter sums up or points the series, and stimulates action.

The foregoing divisions call attention to the main function of each unit. It is not possible to insist too precisely upon an absolute division of the work to be done by each letter. It is not advisable, for example, to drop interest after the first letter, for it is obvious that each succeeding letter must hold the interest of the reader at the same time that it performs its chief function of creating desire, establishing conviction, and stimulating action.

It is, likewise, not good strategy to wait until the last letter before making an attempt to stimulate action. The reader may be ready to act before the last unit is reached. To postpone the stimulus until the last letter is, therefore, to miss an opportunity to make the sale. The urge, however, does not reach its most positive form—the climax of the appeal to action—before the last letter, however long the series.

Division of selling points can be observed, in practice, only to the extent that a certain step in the sales approach is stressed, but not to the complete exclusion of other functions. So, for example, in the letters creating desire, the appeal to interest and the stimulus to action are not neglected, but they are subordinated to the central appeal. This means that interest and action are, in these letters, of relatively less importance than creation of desire.

Reference to inclosures.—Inclosures are practically indispensable in the campaign follow-up. The "Encyclopedia Britannica" campaign, for example, contains elaborate printed material of specimen pages, illustrations (in color) of bindings, colored pictures of the bookshelf offered as a premium, and so forth. For the proper articulation of letter text and inclosures, see page 181.

Example of a short campaign follow-up.—The following campaign letters used by The Standard Heater Company were mailed to prospects whose names had been secured by means of advertising, chiefly in newspapers. The Standard Heater Company reports good results from this series. When the first three letters did not stimulate a response, the President's letter (the fourth) almost invariably did.

The quiet, unobtrusive tone is suited to the high grade of

the heater. The central selling appeal of each letter is clearly defined. The endings are good. The campaign as an organic unit is well planned, each letter fitting into its assigned place. Observe how the third letter stresses the talking points of the previous letters, and how the fourth letter is designed to make a strong close. In letters like these, where the inquiry of the prospect, in response to advertising, insures attention, no space is wasted in establishing contact. The principle of repetition and variety is observed in this series.

(1)

Dear Sir:

We appreciate your inquiry and welcome this opportunity to acquaint you more fully with Spencer Heaters.

No doubt you already know of them in a general way, for Spencers have been in use for the past quarter of a century. During that time there have been several improvements and refinements in design and operation, but no changes in the principle which has been so successful from the first.

The number of Spencer installations has reached a total of more than 30,000. As these include every type of building, from small and large residences to large apartment houses and industrial plants, the adaptability of Spencer Heaters has been demonstrated as thoroughly as their efficiency and economy.

We are inclosing a folder which suggests this wide range of usefulness and briefly explains the great coal economy and convenience of the Spencer.

We desire to serve you in any way we can.

A return post card is inclosed. If you will mail this card, indicating the type of building in which you are interested, we shall be glad to send you more complete information bearing directly upon your problems.

Yours very truly,

(2)

Dear Sir:

When you invest in stocks or bonds, you receive a return in cash in the form of dividends or interest. Building or buying a house or other property involves a similar capital investment, from which you should also expect to receive a proper return.

The heating system is one of the important parts of your building investment, yet about all the return you can expect through the installation of an ordinary type of heater is reasonable warmth and comfort.

The Spencer Heater warrants more than usual consideration, for the reason that its construction, design, and principle of operation assure not only greater comfort and satisfaction, but also cash dividends in reduced coal costs of from $4.00 to $7.00 the ton—the difference in price between No. 1 Buckwheat, which is always plentiful, and the larger domestic sizes, the supply of which is limited.

The Spencer is designed particularly to burn No. 1 Buckwheat. No more tons are necessary than the ordinary type of heater requires of the high-priced grades of anthracite.

A Spencer Heater, installed, not only insures a continuous saving in the expense of operating your heating plant, amounting in a few years to the cost of the heater, but also adds to the market value of your property.

If you desire further particulars, we shall be glad to furnish them.

Very truly yours,

(3)

Dear Sir:

There is more to be considered than the saving of $4.00 to $7.00 the ton by burning No. 1 Buckwheat coal in a Spencer Magazine Feed Heater.

This dollars-and-cents saving is so tangible and easily understood that the advantages of convenience and comfort, through the use of a Spencer, although of equal importance, are likely to be overlooked.

The ordinary type of heater (burning the high-priced grades of anthracite), to be efficient, requires frequent coaling, with a consequent checking of the fire. With a Spencer there is no checking because the coal feeds by gravity from the magazine as needed for the fire. Attention to the heater is necessary but twice a day, morning and night, in cold weather—and once a day in mild weather.

There are no "ups or downs" with a Spencer fire, the constant feeding of coal insuring a uniform and steady heat. Consequently no "downs and ups" for heater attention are necessary during the day in order to maintain a comfortable and constant temperature.

By every count—lowest coal cost, least attention, greatest comfort and convenience—the Spencer Magazine Feed Heater will most efficiently and consistently fill your heating requirements.

Yours very truly,

(4)

Dear Sir:

Our Sales Manager tells me that in response to your inquiry of September 9 you have been furnished with information covering the advantages of Spencer Heaters, in the matter of economy, convenience, and comfort.

A Spencer owner recently remarked to me that he could not understand how anyone in need of a heater, and with full particulars, could afford not to install a Spencer.

I am, therefore, not content to presume that we have done everything we can to serve you, and I ask that you write me personally whether or not you desire any further information from us at this time.

Your interest in our product is appreciated and I want to be sure that you have received all the attention and facts you wish.

A response at your convenience would be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,
(signed)
President

Exercises in Follow-up Sales Letters.

Exercises for Analysis and Revision.

I

Analyze the following examples of follow-up letters for structure, language, and purpose. Suggest improvements, in each case testing your suggestion by rewriting the unsatisfactory sentence, paragraph, or letter as a whole.

(1)

Dear Mr. Babthorne:

In keeping with our custom, we take pleasure in giving you, an old patron, advance notice of our Semi-Annual 15% Discount Sale of Stylebilt Clothes, which will begin on July 5. As you know, this event happens only twice a year—January and July.

Our half-yearly discount sale has become an institution, and is eagerly awaited by hundreds of prudent buyers. This year it means more than ever, because of the decidedly lower price of Stylebilt Clothes prevailing this season.

The discount of 15%, from our regular Maker-to-Wearer prices, is dictated by public policy, not private need. It is a discount, not a

reduction. No price is changed. What it was yesterday it is today, and will be in the future. We have simply increased your buying power by 15% for the brief period of the sale. This applies to the entire stock, excepting, of course, tropical weights.

Remember, Mr. Babthorne, that the early buyer gets the best selection—also that you won't have another chance this year.

We'll be glad to have you call.

Cordially yours,

(2)

Dear Sir:

Do you know that the Spring-Eez you are selling is one of the best sellers during the winter months, and that the colder the climate, the easier it is to market?

Spring-Eez, the decidedly different oil, in addition to being instantly effective wherever rust either retards or prevents mechanical motion, is not affected by cold, does not thicken or congeal in winter, and has the peculiar faculty of dissolving itself into any other oil or grease, adding its lubricating value thereto and making the lubricant to which it is added also unaffected by low temperature.

The injection of one pint of Spring-Eez into any transmission will make the oil or grease flow freely, increase the lubricating quality, and make it easy to shift gears during the coldest weather. A half pint in the average differential likewise insures thorough lubrication.

The fact that Spring-Eez will not gum at any season when used in a Ford timer is also important, and should be mentioned along with its other uses.

Prove what we say on your own car, and then tell your customers. Why not get this business?

Spring-Eez is an honest product well worthy of your best sales efforts. Why not take our suggestions? Tell your trade about its winter uses and see the result.

Yours very truly,

(3)

Dear Sir:

Only twenty-five more shopping days before Christmas.

That means you must get your Christmas stock into your store. After Thanksgiving the real buying rush begins.

In the attached inclosure, read about Westinghouse advertising conducted in your local newspapers. It is building up a demand for Westinghouse goods that will send buyers to you if you are ready.

Get ready. Get your stock of Westinghouse appliances. Get the free advertising matter to let people know you sell the line. Then you will be a part of the greatest electrical heating device campaign the district has ever seen.

The order blank will help you order. Just fill it out and return it to us.

Very truly yours,

(4)

Dear Sir:

There is no telling what prices will prevail before the winter is over, but I do know the following:

1. That you haven't sent me the order for your next lot of collection envelopes.
2. That if you fill in and return the inclosed order blank, I can save you money. You will, furthermore, avoid confusion resulting from late arrival, as I shall arrange to deliver the envelopes in ample time for your needs.
3. That envelopes of Church-Budget quality have never before been offered at a discount of one-third during the autumn months. This price is lower than operating costs warrant, but I am determined to give you good value.

It is not necessary to pay for the envelopes immediately. Orders received now will be delivered promptly, and you may pay thirty days after the envelopes are put into use.

We ask no advance payment. You may send your order now and still earn five per cent on your money.

Mail your order today.

Yours very truly,

(5)

Gentlemen:

A friend—but also a buyer, mind you—said to me: "If you cannot get a premium of fifty cents the hundred pounds for Purity Brand Phosphate, then you are not a salesman."

He showed me how Purity Phosphate looks when slicked up alongside of other products. Then we wet the samples and let them dry, and the color comparison was all the more in our favor.

We inclose a small sample and should like to have you compare it for color with anything whatever. We shall be glad to send a larger sample if desired, to show how pure, strong, and uniform it is.

The inclosure outlines our proposition. We shall hold this offer open one week for your acceptance. Why not let us send you a shipment? Many others have, and we have received the nicest letters you ever read.

If you order now, you are sure to become not only a customer but also a booster for Purity Brand Phosphate as a product that is all its name implies.

Sincerely yours,

(6)

Gentlemen:

Recently we sent you a sample of Purity Brand Phosphate. Can you find anything, anywhere, to match it for color?

Perhaps you feel that a cheaper and poorer colored phosphate, even if it does contain some free acid, will answer your purposes. Yet the small extra sum you pay for Purity Phosphate is insurance that you are giving your customer the best product that money can buy, which means that every time you make a sale you make a friend, and a permanent customer for your goods.

Is not this in itself worth the slight extra cost?

May we have a reply telling us of your experience with the sample?

Sincerely yours,

(7)

Dear Madam:

Perhaps I haven't heard from you because I have not kept in closer touch with your interest in our puppies. So, just before our rush season begins, I am making you a very special offer, a male puppy for $35, and a female puppy for $25.

For expediency I am having my stenographer duplicate this letter, but remember I am right here to give your wishes my best personal attention. If you really want a good police dog, this is your opportunity to get one of the best at less than half our regular price.

The number of puppies offered at this price is limited, and I suggest that you telegraph for a reservation, so as to have the best choice, and follow with your confirmation by mail.

Descriptions of older and partly trained puppies will be cheerfully sent upon request.

Very sincerely yours,

(8) The four following letters were mailed as part of a campaign series (other mailings consisting of folders and

broadsides). At the top of each letter is a strip of six pictures of paint store activities. A brief testimonial from an Acme dealer is quoted at the foot of each letter.

(*a*)

Dear Sir:

From Maine to California—from Florida to Washington, the story is the same.

In thousands of towns the country over, the six scenes you see pictured here are realized right now—today.

What is the secret of the success of Acme Quality agents?

Simply this:

The handling of high-quality dependable merchandise.
The value of a nationally known trade-marked "leader" in each line.
The importance of stocking lines which, through the work on part of the manufacturer, are favorably known in the community.
A live, strong sales policy by the manufacturer that will enable the retail merchant to sell goods with the minimum of effort at a satisfactory profit.

The Acme Quality Plan of Paint Merchandising is strictly a profit plan. It meets the foregoing principles to the letter.

Let us tell you all about "The Plan"—no obligations, of course. Just use the inclosed card.

Yours for a big paint business,

(testimonial)

(*b*)

Dear Sir:

How much rent do you get from your show windows?

Paints and varnishes are largely sold through suggestion. That is why every Acme Quality Agent uses the numerous window displays we send to every agent during the paint-selling season.

The Acme Quality window displays are made for one purpose—to sell paint. Each one tells a real paint story. Each one gets its message over quickly and effectively.

With our advertising campaign working for you and with our window displays in your windows to tell people that you stock the goods they are seeing advertised, there is no reason why you cannot make a big success of your paint department.

Thousands of other progressive dealers, all over the country, are doing a real paint business with "The Acme Quality Plan of Paint Merchandising."

There is no obligation on your part, but it will pay you to hear the story of "The Plan." Just use the inclosed card.

Yours for a big business,

(testimonial)

(*c*)

Dear Sir:

It is not how much we can sell you, but how much we can sell for you, that counts with us.

You know that there is a lot of extra business waiting for you, if you will just go out for it.

Here is where the Acme Quality representative comes in. He is trained to go out into the highways and byways and get orders.

These orders he turns over to you to fill at your regular prices. Results —extra business for you, and a nice additional profit.

The Sellman Hardware Company of Greenville, Ohio, can tell you how our representative sold $2,371 worth of paint in two weeks by calling on consumers.

"The Acme Quality Plan of Paint Merchandising" is the most complete sales-building and profit-increasing plan there is.

"The Plan" embraces merchandising features that, when applied, cannot fail to sell goods for you.

You owe it to your business to hear about "The Plan." The inclosed card is the first step—no obligation on your part.

Yours for a big business,

P.S. "Our store, in handling the Acme Quality line of paints and finishes, has become paint headquarters in our town, mainly because of a complete line, quality goods, advertising system, and local co-operation. Some of our specialties have a turnover of ten times. Every year our paint business makes a nice increased profit for us."—The Robertson-Parris Company, Glendenin, W. Va.

(*d*)

Dear Sir:

If the retailer makes money—so do we.

This statement is sprinkled liberally through the instruction book we give our salesmen.

If you, by means of The Acme Quality Plan of Paint Merchandising, can increase your paint department profits two, three, or five hundred per cent in a few years (many have done it)—that means more profit to us.

That's why every part of "The Plan" is focused on you, the dealer.

That's why

Acme Quality National Advertising in Magazines
Acme Quality Direct-mail Advertising in Your Own Name
Acme Quality Displays for Your Show Windows and Store
Acme Quality Salesmen's Personal Co-operation

are directed into one channel—to help you get more volume and profits out of your paint department.

You have been recommended to us as the most progressive merchant in your locality. Therefore The Acme Quality Plan of Paint Merchandising will appeal to you.

Let us tell you about "The Plan"—no obligation, of course. It will pay you to return the inclosed card.

Yours for a big business,

(testimonial)

(*e*) This letter is typed on the standard eight by eleven sheet. Three circles down the left margin contain three talking points: (1) Consumer Work. (2) Store Service. (3) Educational Work. A questionnaire is reproduced on the back of the sheet, with fill-ins from one of the prosperous dealers.

Dear Sir:

In the last few weeks we've told you by letter a few facts about the Acme Quality Agency. Here is what we offer you.

Paints and Varnishes known the world over to stand for quality.

Our co-operation to help you sell them and increase your paint and varnish business.

Now, Mr. Merchant, we are going to establish an agent in your town. Our advertising has already created a demand for Acme Quality Paints and Varnishes, and we are ready to help you make this demand bigger with our direct advertising to the home-owner and housewife.

You are in business to make money. Can you afford to pass up a live

selling plan like The Acme Quality Agency, and let one of your competitors get it? Remember, we are offering it to you first.

May we have your answer on the inclosed post card?

Yours for more paint business,

The Acme White Lead and Color Works, Detroit, Michigan, secured one hundred new dealers in one month through this campaign.

(9) Can you determine the position of this letter in the follow-up used by the Burroughs Adding Machine Company? Compare the letter on page 231. Is the appeal in the following letter stronger? Why?

Dear Sir:

During the past few weeks we have told you something of the Burroughs Adding Machine and how business men in all lines of trade are using it to make their business more profitable.

The testimonials you have read are typical of thousands of others from all parts of the country. Most of these Burroughs users tested the machine on their own work before buying. They found that the Burroughs more than paid for itself in errors prevented and time saved. You, too, are welcome to try this machine for fifteen days on your own work, absolutely without cost to you. You will be under no obligation to buy. Just give the machine a fair trial, on every kind of figure work you have.

Remember, the cash price is only $125, but if you buy the machine on deferred payments you need pay us only $12.50 down, and the balance in easy monthly payments.

Do not delay longer. Mail us the coupon now, and we'll see that you get a machine promptly.

Very truly yours,

II

Criticize and then rewrite (or prepare a new series to take the place of) the following series of follow-ups. They were used by a large corporation (manufacturing silverware) to follow up inquiries. Improve for *correctness* and *concreteness*.

(*A*-2) *Fifteen days after A*-1.

Gentlemen:

On March 6 we had the pleasure of answering your communication of March 4, submitting quotations on various items requested by you.

Up to the present writing we have not heard from you and are writing to ascertain if any decision has been made.

If we can be of any further assistance by sending additional information or samples, we would consider it a favor to have you call on us.

Yours very truly,

(*A*-2) *Fifteen days after A*-1.

Gentlemen:

Has our letter of March 6 been overlooked?

Our quotations were forwarded some time ago and as we have not been favored with your valued order, we again bring this matter to your attention for immediate consideration. If you are still interested in the purchase of the equipment quoted upon, kindly write us.

If we can be of further assistance or send samples from our large and varied line which might assist you in deciding, word from you as to just how we can aid you will be appreciated.

Awaiting your reply with interest, we remain,

Yours very truly,

(*A*-3)

Gentlemen:

Your request for prices on our line of hollow ware was promptly answered by our quotations of March 6. At the time of your writing us you were evidently in the market and we desire to be of service to you. As your valued order was not received it has therefore been brought to the writer's attention.

If our quotations did not cover your requirements, write us at this time, giving us a better understanding of your needs. We are confident we can meet your requirements with the large and varied assortment of designs and qualities which are manufactured by us. Can we be of any further assistance to you in helping you or your customer to reach a decision?

Yours very truly,

(*A*-4)

Gentlemen:

Since writing you on March 6 in regard to silver equipment for your hotel, we have not received the list of items covering your requirements for estimate.

We are writing you at this time as we wish to assure you of an opportunity to bid on your silverware equipment, and to learn how we can best serve you in furnishing flatware and hollow ware. We can offer various qualities which would give satisfactory service at a reasonable price, thus reducing the average cost for you to a minimum.

Please send us your list and quotations, samples, etc., will be furnished promptly. If necessary a special hotel representative will be pleased to call upon your request.

We await an opportunity to serve you and remain,

Yours very truly,

(*B*-1) *To follow up hotel prospects.*

Gentlemen:

Since writing you on October 10 we have not received your list of silverware you will require for your new hotel.

We offer you the benefit of our long experience in furnishing equipments, such as you will need, and if you will forward us your plans of seating arrangements will be pleased to furnish you with a net estimate and suggestions of your possible requirements.

Permit us to suggest that you place your order early, to be delivered at the time you especially desire it.

Kindly let us hear from you or if you prefer our special hotel representative will call to discuss details with you.

Yours very truly,

(*B*-2)

Gentlemen:

In acknowledgment of your inquiry of October 8 we quoted and sent photo sheets, offering samples to assist you in making your selection. Not hearing from you we are in doubt whether or not your order has been placed and dislike the idea of filing away your inquiry unless we are sure your wants have been supplied.

Kindly write us if there is anything further we can do to assist you. If you have finished with the photosheets sent, would appreciate the return

of them as they are part of a complete set. Should you need them at any future time, will be glad to loan them again.

Awaiting your further inquiries, we remain

Yours very truly,

(*B*-3)

Gentlemen:

Several letters we have written do not appear to have been answered, all of which were in answer to your inquiry of October 8 for quotations on silverware for your hotel. As we wish to extend to you satisfactory service, will you kindly advise if you are supplied with the prices and information you desire? If any additional samples will assist, please do not hesitate to call on us for the fullest co-operation.

Awaiting your further favors, we are

Yours very truly,

(*B*-4)

Gentlemen:

We would have been very pleased to be of service to you, but as our recent letters of inquiry do not appear to have been answered, we are filing your correspondence for future reference with regret.

When you are again in the market for silverware, may we receive your valued inquiries? Kindly write us and our best efforts will be extended to serve you.

Yours very truly,

III

Analyze the Straus campaign series reprinted below. (1) Draw up a list of the essential qualities for the campaign follow-up, and show how each of these qualities is illustrated in the Straus follow-up. (2) Is the principle of repetition and variety well observed? Indicate how. (3) State the central thought of each letter in a sentence. (4) What device is used to make the letter seem individual? Is it effective? (5) Does the series come to a strong close? (6) Is there a good reason for mailing these letters in the dated order? Why not mail such a series in July, August, and September? Justify the position of each unit in the series. ——Each letter, on a seven by eleven sheet, is signed by the president of the company.

(1) *October* 31.

Dear Doctor Babthorne:

Have you ever stopped to consider the particular advantages that you may derive from investing in first mortgage real estate bonds?

Bonds not only provide, so to speak, "insurance for old age," but they also create an absolute estate and an income that can be absolutely depended upon at all times.

The Arthur J. Straus Company is always interested in helping friends form the bond habit—truly a most desirable habit—and in giving investment counsel to those who have already formed it.

As a general rule, of course, an estate is best built up through the purchase of conservative securities, primarily with safety of principal and income in mind. There is nothing that will compare with first mortgage real estate bonds.

The bonds of the Mal Investment Company are a good instance of the real estate bond. This issue covers four different building enterprises. The completed buildings of these groups already bring a net income larger than the total amount of interest requirements for the entire issue. Particular notice is called to the fact that at final maturity only 40% of the entire issue remains outstanding, this amount being $144,000, and that the value of the real estate, exclusive of all buildings, as appraised by competent appraisers is valued at $142,000.

We have a number of other issues, equally good, and should appreciate the opportunity of consulting with you regarding them, Dr. Babthorne, if interested. Or if you wish, we shall be glad to have our representative call on you.

Sincerely yours,

(2) *November* 14.

Dear Doctor Babthorne:

The real secret of using money productively is to keep it safe and let it grow. It will increase itself by compounding faster than the average investor can enlarge it by trading.

Insurance companies make a science of investment. Yet testimony in the recent New York Insurance investigations brought out the fact that over a period of years they make higher returns from conservative investments than from speculation. Hence, the enhanced investment value of first mortgage real estate bonds.

This, Dr. Babthorne, is part of the reason that we offer only first mortgage real estate bonds. During our many years' practice in selling

first mortgage real estate bonds, we have established a no-loss record among our investors. We have, in fact, been remarkably successful in this. We prefer never to put profit before safety of principal. If we may have the opportunity to talk with you, to go into details on these points, we shall be glad to make clear the basis of our belief in our ability to serve you unusually well.

May we have a representative call?

Sincerely yours,

(3) *November* 28.

Dear Doctor Babthorne:

Generally, investments depend upon two kinds of knowledge: knowledge of general unchanging principles, and knowledge of day-to-day conditions in particular industries. These principles are not always so easy to learn, and it is not necessary to know anything about them if you invest your money in first mortgage real estate bonds on improved income-producing properties.

We have a diversified list of investments which we can recommend at the present time; and shortly we shall have an exceptionally good, new issue, which will be eagerly sought after.

We suggest, Dr. Babthorne, that you avail yourself of the opportunity of investing in first mortgage real estate bonds, secured by improved local property. We shall be pleased at any time to show you personally the property securing our various issues. If you will telephone Grand 8080, we shall be glad to make an appointment.

Sincerely yours,

(4) *December* 8.

Dear Doctor Babthorne:

Now is the time to make your reservations on January investments, so that such moneys as will then be available can be put to work without loss of any interest. We would advise that you invest at least a portion of your funds in our first mortgage real estate bonds, secured by improved, income-producing properties in this city.

We have on hand for January a diversified list of these high grade first mortgage bonds, which we will reserve for you to be taken up at your convenience.

At the present time, we should take pleasure in serving you, Dr. Babthorne, and if you cannot conveniently call at our office, a note from you will have our personal attention.

Sincerely yours,

(5) *December* 29.

Dear Doctor Babthorne:

Since last October we have written you a number of times about investment matters.

We feel certain, Dr. Babthorne, that you realize the need of saving money—for adjusting your way of living to your income so that there is a surplus for investment. We are sure also that the things we have said and the study you have given the matter have convinced you of the need for expert aid in investing that surplus safely.

We have not had the pleasure of a call from you at our offices, which cover the whole third floor of the new Straus Building, Grand Avenue and Third Street.

The size of our institution in itself is evidence of reliability and strength. It signifies that a large number of patrons have invested in our securities, which is proof that the securities we offer are of the type that attract experienced, careful investors.

Our organization has served faithfully and well an ever-growing clientele in showing them how to guard their money and placing it where they will always have it and get all that it earns.

Our reputation, experience, and responsibility attract the highest type of investors and also bring us for acceptance or refusal the choicest properties for consideration.

We shall take care of your investments, whether $100 or more. Our $100 client receives as much attention as our numerous large investors. If you have not started, why not start with a $100 bond?

Sincerely yours,

Problems in Writing Follow-up Letters.

1. Plan a follow-up series to solicit money for building a new church in your community. Assume that the congregation to which you belong has outgrown its present building, which is very old. The committee to which you belong has delegated you to plan letters for the campaign to secure $150,000 for the erection of the new edifice. Assume that it is now February 15 and that the personal solicitation is to begin on May 15.

Plan the series, making your appeal to community spirit, loyalty to the church, parental desire to give children clean surroundings for social and religious activities, etc. The let-

ters should be businesslike and sound as to reasoning and emotional appeal.——The purpose is to prepare for the personal visit of members of the committee, who will actually solicit funds. Your letters, therefore, must sell the campaign to the mailing list. Anticipate objections.

Submit a complete plan: purpose, number of units, mailing dates, appeal used in each unit, outline of each letter, inclosures to be used and with what letters, etc.

Submit, furthermore, the complete first and last letters.

2. Plan letters to induce parents to send their sons to the Alamac Summer Camp for Boys (location to be chosen by you), established in 1909 and continued without interruption each summer.

The camp has a limited enrollment, is open to boys from ten to sixteen years of age, is conducted for health and recreation, and teaches boys self-reliance and other manly traits of character. Add any facts you find necessary for creating desire and establishing conviction. Remember that the boy must be attracted, but that the final approval lies with his parents.

Plan the series, indicating the series as a whole, and the individual units, as directed in the preceding exercise. Explain in detail how you get your mailing list.

Write the first and last letters completely, and submit the first and last paragraphs of the intervening letters.

3. The International Clearing House, 760 Broadway, New York, has open territories for radio dealers who can sell the Pfannstiehl Overtone Receiver.

Plan a series of follow-up letters to live dealers whose names were secured by means of newspaper and magazine advertisements. Use inclosures.

(*a*) What system of follow-up would you use? (*b*) Outline the series. How many letters? What selling points? How are these distributed? (*c*) Write the first letter of the series. (*d*) Write the last letter. (*e*) Write the first and last paragraphs of the intervening letters.

You may use the following paragraph as a source of material. Use your own language. Supply additional material as you see the need.

Internal noises completely eliminated, without the use of neutralizing devices: radio simplified and made enjoyable; distant stations clearly

without distortion; no stray oscillations; squeals and chatter eliminated; full tone beauty results. Pfannstiehl found the real causes of stray oscillations that interfere with clear reception. The Pfannstiehl devices get rid of all internal interference. The technical means employed are a scientific story of great importance to radio engineers and interest to dealers. The average user wants results, which he gets in clear tones in the Pfannstiehl, tonal charm, real music, full, rich resonance of voice or instrument. The station finder device takes the guesswork out of tuning and enables even the inexperienced to tune the receiving set quickly and easily. Exclusive franchise to dealers. Pfannstiehl markets exclusively through dealers. One protected dealer in each community, in large towns one in each shopping zone. A five-tube receiver using the new system of tuned radio frequency. Endorsed by the pioneer radio store, Wanamaker's. Use coupon for information as to the terms of the exclusive agency.

4. The head of a local business school has engaged you to write a series of letters to pupils about to graduate from the local grade schools. The purpose is to urge these pupils to enter his business school. The mailing list is not based on inquiries.

Submit an outline of the series (campaign? wear-out?), indicating the number of units, inclosures (if any), selling points, distribution of these among the units, and the action desired to be taken by your prospects. Point out the reason for the order of your units. Write a key sentence for each letter, and one for each paragraph of the letter. Justify the number of letters you have decided upon. Write the last letter of the series.

5. Plan a series for use by a well-known, long-established (45 years) savings bank to increase the number of its depositors. This is the only savings bank in the city. There are commercial banks paying 3½ per cent interest, but your bank pays 4 per cent on all deposits up to $3000, interest compounded semi-annually. A savings bank specializes in time deposits. Savings banks are strictly supervised by the state to guard the savings of the people. Every depositor is a partner in the bank and has a part in the dividends in the form of interest. Banking can be safely done by mail. Find other selling points.

Submit a complete plan of the series, proceeding as directed in Problem 4. Explain your plan fully, as though you were selling it to the head of the savings bank.

6. Prepare a follow-up series designed to sell to business men a year's subscription to a magazine. You may use: *System, The Advertising Fortnightly, Printers' Ink, The Printers' Ink Monthly, Forbes,* or any other magazine appealing to business men. Write the letters. Attach an explanation of your plan and its execution: mailing list secured how? use two cent stamp? size of letter sheet? inclosures? sample copy? how remit price of subscription?

7. Prepare a follow-up series designed to sell to women a year's subscription to a magazine. You may use: *Good Housekeeping, The House Beautiful, McCall's, Harper's Bazaar, Vogue, The Ladies' Home Journal, The Woman's Home Companion,* and so forth. Proceed as in the preceding exercise.

8. Prepare a series of follow-up letters to be sent to the alumni of your institution. The purpose is to prepare them for the visit of an authorized representative (of the alumni clubs) who will solicit funds for the endowment of your institution. You name the amount the drive is to realize. Contributions may be made on the installment plan. The representative will take the pledge for the total amount, but no payment is made to him. Payments begin one year from the date of the pledge. The alumni committee is in control of the disposition of the funds, in co-operation with the accredited officials of the institution. The alumni of your institution are not as a rule wealthy, but all of them are loyal and willing to support a campaign of this kind to put the institution on a sound financial basis. Your letters must make the visit of the representative welcome. Proceed as specially directed in Problem 1.

9. Write a criticism of the follow-up letters printed below. Use as headings for your criticism: structure (four functions of the sales letter); getting attention, arousing desire, establishing conviction, stimulating action (considered with regard to phrasing); paragraphing; correctness; concreteness; repetition and variety; linking the series; timing the series. ——Add headings as you see the need.

In writing this criticism, assume that you have been engaged by the firm to criticize the series and make constructive suggestions. Rewrite letters or paragraphs, as required.

(1)

Dear Mr. Dalton:

Phrases conjure up thoughts.

And the phrase "Ready-to-Wear" probably conjures up the thought of Factories at Rochester and a big Store in New York and a floor full of overanxious salesmen ready to pounce on you when you come in and sell you a suit which may possibly fit you by accident.

But that's not D'Andrea's.

We are custom tailors in the first place, and in the second place we wouldn't have the kind of trade we have if we ran our place on those lines.

It makes no difference to us whether we make up a special suit for you or fit you with one of our ready-to-wear suits. The materials, styling and workmanship are not changed one iota in the ready-to-wear. But the *ready-to-wear* price is only $75.00.

Sincerely yours,

President

March 16,
1 9 2 5.

(2)

Dear Mr. Dalton:

Won't you examine these samples of fine fabrics? Their quality is what we'd like you to note in particular; the texture and weave. They are our own importations from the best English and Scotch Mills.

These good woolens, Mr. Dalton, go into the clothes we tailor-in-advance at $75; and into the clothes we tailor-to-order at $125. Same fabrics, same linings, same workmanship are put into the one, as into the other. No difference whatever in the two save in the price.

Please do not attempt to judge the range of patterns we offer by these few. They are not intended for that. Only by a careful inspection of the many patterns we carry could you do this. If it would be only to show you, we would appreciate your call.

Sincerely yours,

October 16, 1925.

(3)

Dear Mr. Dalton:

Tailored clothes are to be given preference, of course. Finer workmanship goes into them; better trimmings and linings and fabrics. They give better fit, and they hold their shape longer.

D'Andrea Clothes are tailored-to-order or tailored-in-advance. And excepting for "price" and "when" they're tailored, there's absolutely no difference between the two. Both are tailored in our own shop, by the same hands, under our personal supervision. The tailored-to-order garments sell for $125; the identical clothes tailored-in-advance are $75.

Men who formerly would consider only clothes tailored-to-order—many our own customers—frankly tell us now that at first they doubted that we could give them such fit, and such workmanship in clothes tailored-in-advance. But, as we explain, unless we are absolutely sure that we can give our patrons equal satisfaction—if there is any doubt in our minds as to fit—we will recommend the tailored-to-order service at the higher price. Very seldom, however—in not more than 5% of the cases—do we find this necessary.

When you find it convenient, Mr. Dalton, we should like very much if you would stop in so that we might do more than tell you about these clothes; show them to you.

May we have that opportunity soon?

November 3, 1925. Sincerely yours,

(4)

Dear Mr. Dalton:

They say the only part of a selling talk that counts is the part the prospect believes.

We've sent you quite a few letters. You know the story from our angle—quality, price, fit, personal interest—all we can put on paper.

But you sit tight. How's that—?

Wouldn't it mean a worth-while saving if we SHOULD be telling the facts?

Wouldn't it pay, then, to find out?

Sincerely yours,

November 17, 1925.

10. Criticize the following letter. To what type of follow-up does it belong? Rewrite the letter.

Dear Sir:

Is it possible
that you have forgotten all about us, for we are surprised and at a loss to understand the reason why you have not called on us recently.

If you were going down town and met an acquaintance in whom you had faith and confidence—you spoke to him cheerfully—he looked at you and did not even nod—wouldn't you feel hurt?

At this time we are puzzled not having heard from you oftener, surely there must be something in Furniture or Rugs that you have need for in your home—or something you would care to exchange. We will take your old furniture and give you a liberal allowance on any new purchase.

We have just received a quantity of fine dining room, bedroom, and living room suites, which we are prepared to offer you at a real bargain prices. If not interested at the present time, will you tell your friends and neighbors about us?

Thanking you for past patronage and hoping to be able to serve you again in the near future,

Sincerely yours,
Captain Storage Furniture Warehouse

Chapter IX

INQUIRIES, ORDERS, AND RESPONSES

Inquiries, orders, and responses to these should incorporate the essential qualities of business writing. Inquiries, and responses to orders and inquiries, are not modern unless they embody the service viewpoint, and observe the rule that every business letter is a selling letter.

Inquiries and responses are too frequently ineffective because they are subjected to so-called routine treatment. Incompetent or unenlightened correspondents use "routine" as an excuse for dictation which drones out stereotyped phrases. The fact is that no employer can afford to have dictated letters treated in a routine manner. Capable correspondents abhor such letters. They know the unfortunate results of routine treatment in the loss of good will and sales. Every letter worth dictating at all is worth dictating well.

Letter forms versus individual letters.—When individual treatment is not important, letters should not be dictated. Intolerable waste results, and expenses in the correspondence department are pyramided unnecessarily, when the so-called routine letter is used in place of printed forms, form letters, and form paragraphs. Routine letters are, in effect, nothing but memoranda, as, for example, in the acknowledgment of an order from an old customer. When situations are almost uniformly standard, so that practically all inquiries and orders can be classified within well-defined groups, a system of printed forms with blank spaces for the fill-in of appropriate items is adequate. These are more effective than the usual hackneyed, stilted, impersonal dronings of inefficient correspondents. At any wage, these mechanical men are high-priced as compared with the greater efficiency and lower cost of printed forms. Printed forms can be devised by an expert, who, to assure variety, changes the phrasing from printing to printing, or season to season.

When letters are dictated, human interest is indispensable. Responses to inquiries, first orders, or defective and refused

orders, offer rare opportunities, which are too often systematically (in fact, automatically) relegated to routine memoranda treatment in the hands of unresponsive correspondence clerks.

Inquiries.

Every letter of inquiry offers a sales opportunity. Helpful, considerate responses to inquiries are business getters, if not directly by way of orders, at least indirectly by way of good will. The inquirer is a potential customer and booster. The inquiry, if cheerfully handled, may lead to a profitable order. The correspondent should make the way to the order easy and pleasant.

There are two great classes of inquiries: solicited and unsolicited. Solicited inquiries are in response to advertising leads of one kind or another. They are usually promptly and adequately answered because the staff has been prepared to handle inquiries expected as part of a sales campaign. Unsolicited inquiries, on the contrary, do not as a rule receive the careful attention they deserve. They are a fair field for salesmanship. When someone requests a catalogue, booklet, advertising matter, or information about service, a prompt, definite, and personal response keeps alive the prospect's interest in the product or service. Requests for information to be used in an investigation should likewise be handled in the spirit of service.

A good letter of inquiry is *definite, compact,* and *courteous.* The tone should be confident and positive. Apologies are out of place. The inquiry should not be made if the writer is trespassing upon the time of the executive or business man. If the request is legitimate and simple, the letter should be brief and to the point, avoiding irrelevant explanatory introductory matter. It is impolite as well as hackneyed to close the letter with, "We thank you in advance for your prompt attention to our inquiry."

The following is sufficient.

Gentlemen:

Please send me your booklet, "Investment Guide," as advertised in this morning's "Times."

Yours truly,

Equally brief and direct are the inquiries addressed to bureaus of information conducted by private organizations for their members or by the government for its citizens. Business men, for example, often find it necessary to write to Washington for authoritative information. Two such letters follow, both directed to the Federal Trade Commission, Washington, D. C.

(1)

Gentlemen:

Please tell me whether there are any publications on systems of accounts for retail coal dealers.

Very truly yours,

(2)

Gentlemen:

I have been asked to write an article on co-operative marketing organizations, particularly on the Grain Growing Organization. (This states the reason for the inquiry.)

Although I have some acquaintance with the subject, I shall need additional and particularly up-to-date information on it. (This leads to the request.)

Can you refer me to sources of this information?
Have you published anything on this subject recently?

(The foregoing questions make the request specific.)

Very truly yours,

When, on the other hand, a favor is asked of a business man, the letter is usually somewhat longer. The greater length is necessitated by the addition of a paragraph explaining possible advantages accruing to the reader if he grants the request. If the advantage appeals to him, he is inclined to respond favorably. Furthermore, because the business man is under no obligation to grant the favor, the letter should close with a brief statement of appreciation. The headings of such a letter are:

1. Reason for making the request.
2. The request proper.
3. Possible advantage to the reader if the request is granted.
4. Statement of appreciation.

The following letter incorporates these structural units.

Dear Sir:

We are investigating certain conditions which we believe exist in the teaching profession. In order that we may intelligently complete our analysis, it is necessary that we secure additional information. (Reason for the request.)

With this objective in mind we have prepared a questionnaire, a copy of which is inclosed. We earnestly invite your co-operation. (The request proper.)

A few of the questions asked may possibly appear to be so personal that you may not feel justified in answering them. Please, however, reply to as many of them as you feel free to answer, and return the questionnaire in the inclosed, stamped envelope. (The request proper explained.)

Without your personal assistance our investigation must fail. To those who assist us we shall in due course furnish a résumé of our findings. (How the reader will benefit.)

Meanwhile we confidently anticipate an early reply, and assure you we shall greatly appreciate your sincere co-operation in answering as many of the questions as you can. (Statement of appreciation.)

Very truly yours,

A large department store has found the succeeding letter very successful. Observe that the structural units follow the outline given above.

Dear Madam:

Our recent announcement of Special Offerings, sent to your address, has been returned to us by the postal authorities.

This may be due to your temporary absence from the city, but as we desire to have your correct address upon our mailing list, we shall appreciate your courtesy in furnishing us with the information requested on the inclosed post card.

We assure you that your purchases have been highly appreciated, and that we anticipate a continuance of your valued patronage.

Very truly yours,

Responses to Inquiries.

When an individually dictated letter is used in response to an inquiry, the reader should be made to feel that he is

receiving individual attention. The S. D. Warren Company, manufacturers of paper, realize the sales value of carefully considered letters of response: "We use no stereotyped form letter. Practically every letter we write is in direct response to a definite inquiry, and the conditions governing each case are quite dissimilar." The personal touch should be evident in the substance and tone of the response. The carefully adjusted material should meet the needs of the inquirer, and the manner of phrasing it should suggest a genuine willingness to serve. The response should be *prompt, complete, appropriate,* and *cheerful.*

When the request is granted.—The headings of a good letter of response giving the desired information are usually as follows:

1. Express cheerfulness in granting the favor requested.
2. Give the information and, if possible, add relevant material.
3. Offer further assistance.

Observe how the following letter incorporates these headings.

Dear Sir:

I am glad to answer your letter of April 15, requesting information concerning summer courses for 1925.

An Abridged Announcement is being mailed to you to-day. You will find the courses in Business English outlined on pages 7 and 8.

A bulletin fully describing these courses will be mailed to you as soon as it comes from the printer.

As I am one of the teachers of this subject, I shall be pleased to hear from you if I can be of further service to you.

Sincerely yours,

Observe how the following letter more than satisfies the inquirer.

Dear Sir:

Permission to quote from our newspaper advertisements is very gladly granted.

That you may have a complete set of these advertising messages at hand for ready reference, we are inclosing a copy of our booklet, "In

1925 the high cost of forgetting will not be lower." Attached to the inside front cover you will find reproductions in miniature of all the advertisements in our 1925 series.

It occurs to us that you will cover the subject of illustrated letters in business, and that an examination of No. 3 of our "More Business" series may yield helpful information on this subject. A copy of the book is attached. This edition is now out of print, as it was very much in demand.

If we can do anything further to help you, do not hesitate to call upon us.

Yours very truly,

Notice how completely and appropriately the following letter gives the information requested in the inquiry on page 290.

Dear Sir:

I am in receipt of your letter of October 1, in the matter of up-to-date information concerning co-operative marketing organizations.

The Division of Agricultural Co-operation, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Mr. C. L. Christensen, chief, issues a periodical on co-operation, as well as special bulletins from time to time.

Considerable has been published concerning the Grain Marketing Company. Perhaps the best source of information would be the Weekly News Letter of the American Farm Bureau Federation (58 East Washington Street, Chicago, Ill.), issues of the past three months.

You ask if I have published anything recently on the subject. My report on co-operation in foreign countries, prepared after my trip abroad last summer, is still in the hands of the Commission, and is not yet available for distribution. An article on "Europe Regulating Trade Associations for Public Benefit" appeared in the N. Y. Evening Post on March 27, 1922. This was one of a series of twenty-five articles on Co-operative Competition published by the Post, and a booklet containing the series was also printed. In May, 1924, the American Bankers Association Journal printed my article on "Trying Out Co-operative Banking in Foreign Countries."

Cordially yours,

When the inquiry is not clear.—When the inquiry is not clear, it is easy to lose one's temper at the expense of the inquirer. Patient consideration, however, reflects the service ideal, which should prevail in the most trying situations.

Manufacturers who solicit requests for samples make every effort to trace a request when a writer has failed to give a complete address. In this respect, their patient persistence sets letter-writers a good example. An incomplete or vague inquiry should be followed up courteously and considerately, care being taken not to offend the inquirer by suggesting his ignorance or carelessness in ordering. The following letter, emanating from a government office, is tactful and considerate.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of September 20, in which you ask for reports on forestry subjects, has been referred to me.

I take pleasure in sending you a number of miscellaneous publications which I believe will be of interest to you.

I am wondering if you do not have some particular phase of forestry in mind. If you will let me know what you are most interested in, I shall be very glad to send you all the information available on the subject.

Very truly yours,

When the request is refused.—In refusing ordinary requests it is sufficient to write a compact but courteous letter, frankly stating the reason for the refusal. Apologies and lengthy explanations are out of place. Express regret, and state your reason for the refusal.

Dear Sir:

We are very sorry not to be able to grant your request of July 26 for copies of Batten's Wedge, as the number of copies is immediately exhausted by our mailing list.

Very truly yours,

When an important request must be refused, the reader should be sold on the refusal. The tone of the following letter is firm but courteous. It was written by the circulation manager of a magazine specializing intensively in a limited field. The magazine does not seek subscriptions outside this immediate field. The response indicates how an experienced writer may with dignity and sincerity take the edge off a refusal. The principle is sound: Even though you cannot make a friend, you can avoid making an enemy.

Dear Sir:

As requested in your letter of January 9, I am glad to send today a copy of the issue of January 2. Please accept it with our compliments.

I also wish to thank you for your kind words for our magazine, but since our publications are made specially for national advertisers and advertising agencies, we are prevented from accepting subscriptions outside this field.

In selecting our prospects for subscriptions, we are careful to pick out only those who are actually advertising in some form. Our experience has shown us that readers outside of our field find little of interest in the magazine, and discontinue as soon as their subscriptions are up.

We, therefore, seek only what we call "logical" subscribers.

I feel quite certain you will understand our position, but I want you to know that your interest is very much appreciated.

Very sincerely yours,

Making an appointment.—When personal acquaintance or intimacy exists between the person addressed and the inquirer, a whimsical tone establishes agreeable contact. Cheerfulness, of the type illustrated in the following inquiry and response, makes the letters different. Both business men are interested in the same project, but the matter is not pressing. The letters served the purpose delightfully—that of making an appointment.

Dear Mr. Whimsey:

My unfailing office system informs me that, as the old almanacs used to say, "about this time" Charles A. Whimsey will be in New York. I wonder if this is true . . . ?

Sincerely yours,

Dear Mr. Witherley:

The "old almanacs" were sometimes right. They had a phrase like this for January: "If water freezes on the south side of the house at noon this time of the year, it is likely to be cold."

Following the "likelihood" expressed by the almanac, I think that we shall be in New York about the 20th of the current month for three or four days, and I shall surely call upon you at the office.

Cordially yours,

Securing a speaker.—The following letters are good examples of their kind, representing an exchange of letters on the matter of securing a speaker for a banquet.

Mr. A. Williams, secretary of a business study class, appealed to Mr. G. H. Burnside for assistance in getting a speaker for the final meeting of the class.

Mr. G. H. Burnside,
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. Burnside:

We are planning a final dinner for our study class in economics. I am asking you, therefore, to try to get for us a speaker from New York who would give us a talk on some phase of economics. Our meetings have been very successful, and we want to close the year with a bang.

Very truly yours,
A. Williams.

Mr. Burnside succeeded in getting Mr. M. D. Macready, one of the best known statisticians and economists in the country, to speak. Mr. Macready, however, consented with the stipulation that he should not be put on the banquet program where he would have to speak at ten or eleven o'clock, after a cabaret performance and a lot of oratory. Mr. Burnside therefore wrote to Mr. Williams, who had asked for the speaker, as follows:

Mr. A. Williams,
Peoria, Ill.

Dear Mr. Williams:

I have succeeded in getting Mr. M. D. Macready, chief statistician of the Mercantile Bank, for your meeting on April 28. Mr. Macready is one of the best known economists and statisticians in the country.

He is, moreover, a very effective speaker, not only for economists but also for business men. I know that he will give you a fascinating and instructive talk.

When I spoke to Mr. Macready about the meeting, he asked me whether it was to be a long banquet filled with speakers and vaudeville performers. I assured him that it wasn't. He told me he asked this question because he had had to address audiences at ten or eleven o'clock, after three or four other speakers and a lot of entertainment, and that he felt it was a little bit unfair to him and the audience for

him to talk at such an unfavorable hour. I know you won't object to my mentioning this fact.

Won't you get in touch with Mr. Macready yourself, asking him, for example, for the exact title of his address, and so forth. I think that he will talk on "The Growth of Production in the United States," and illustrate it with several charts.

I hope that you will have an excellent meeting.

Very sincerely yours,
G. H. Burnside.

The meeting was a very satisfactory one, and Mr. Williams wrote a very nice letter to Mr. Macready. Mr. Burnside, who had procured the speaker, felt, of course, also under obligations to tell Mr. Macready how satisfactory the meeting was, and to thank him for coming, as follows:

Mr. M. D. Macready,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Macready:

I have heard from two men in Peoria, both of whom were very enthusiastic, about your talk to them. They have probably written a "bread and butter" letter to you, but to show you that the "bread and butter" letter was not a perfunctory thing, I am going to quote from the letter of Mr. Williams to me:

"Our final dinner for the Study Class was a decided success, chiefly because of the very excellent address given by Mr. Macready and to the open forum conducted by him at the end of the meeting. Mr. Macready made a decided hit."

Very sincerely yours,
G. H. Burnside.

Order Letters.

An order letter is a welcome visitor in every business. Advertisements and sales letters, and in fact all types of business letters, exist for the purpose of swelling the number of order letters.

An order letter must be clear and accurate. All essential data should be definitely and completely stated. The exact wishes of the buyer should be precisely phrased. When an order blank does not accompany the letter, the component

parts of the order should be itemized. The complete order letter contains four structural units.

1. Complete and exact data concerning the goods: (*a*) Exact trade name, catalogue number, size, color, style, price, etc. (*b*) Quantity desired in each item.

2. Specific directions for shipment: (*a*) Parcel post, express, motor truck, freight, steamship, packet, etc. (*b*) Exact date when shipment is desired. (*c*) Complete address. (One large shipper ascribes delay in filling orders to incomplete addresses and to omission of the address. "We are good guessers and have an expert tracer; but many orders cannot be shipped until we receive a complaint that identifies the order with the incomplete address.")

3. Manner of payment: (*a*) Refer to your credit account if you have one. (*b*) If money is inclosed, state definitely in what form and amount. (*c*) If money is not inclosed, and you do not enjoy credit, state how you intend to pay.

4. Special considerations: These include information that helps the seller meet your desires and needs with regard to the goods ordered. The close of the letter stresses the point uppermost in your mind with regard to quality, prices, discounts, promptness of shipment, etc.

Dear Sir:

Please send the Atlantic Monthly for one year, beginning with the March, 1925, issue, to

Mr. Alfred Bush,
Liverpool, New York.

I am inclosing a money order to the amount of four dollars in payment for this subscription.

Please send the March issue so that it will reach Mr. Bush on March 5, his birthday.

Because I am giving him the subscription as a birthday gift, kindly make a special notation to the effect that the magazine should reach him on March 5.

Sincerely yours,

Responses to order letters.—An order should be acknowledged on the day it is received. When nothing stands in the way of filling the order of an old customer, a printed form with spaces for the fill-in is sufficient. Individually dictated

responses are necessitated by defective orders, orders from new customers, or unusually large orders from old customers. Every individual response is a selling letter.

Order accepted—old customer.—When a customer of long standing sends in an unusually large order, a personal letter of appreciation may well take the place of a printed post card or letter-form of acknowledgment. The personal letter is sent promptly on the day the order is received. It has the qualities of definiteness, cheerfulness, and persuasiveness. The following headings are indispensable:

1. Thank the customer.
2. Restate the order.
3. State definitely how the order is being handled and shipped.
4. Add one or two paragraphs bristling with live sales talk. The material and spirit of this sales talk concentrate the customer's attention on the sales points of the goods, arouse his enthusiasm, and show him that you are interested in his profits.

Dear Mr. Calton:

Thank you for your generous order of March 12, which we take as an indication of your increased business in our goods.

3 Frocks of Fashion, No. 208, Size 36	@$39.00	$117.00
2 Ultra Smart, No. 214, Size 34	@$35.00	$ 70.00
4 Utility, No. 126, Size 38	@$19.00	$ 76.00
6 French Inspiration, No. 38, Size 34	@$49.50	$297.00
Total		$540.00

These gowns are being shipped today by United States Railway Express and should reach you on Thursday in time for the week-end trade.

Your customers will find in these smart models just the quality and design most in vogue among women who pride themselves on their dress. As in the past, we are supplying the unusual, the different, the uncommon modes at lowest prices. To sell our gowns is to convince your fashionable trade that you have initiative and that you are the one who first features new styles for those who look for inspiration and individuality in dress.

The styles we are sending you are authentic, original, and appropriate.

The most critical buyers will immediately recognize the quality and style of these gowns.

We assure you of our personal attention and of our steadfast desire to please you.

Very sincerely yours,

Order accepted—new customer.—The structure of the letter welcoming the new customer into your circle of satisfied customers is essentially like that of the foregoing letter. The first paragraph definitely and cheerfully greets him as a valuable customer. The closing paragraph stresses your personal interest in his needs, and convinces him that you mean to give him 100 per cent service. In other respects the letter to the new customer follows the headings of the letter to the old customer. The first and last paragraphs of a letter to a new customer follow.

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your order of March 17. I wish to welcome you into our large family of satisfied customers, and to assure you that we shall do everything in our power to make the sale of our gowns profitable to you. We take a genuine interest in the increased profits of our dealers.

* * * * * * *

Your interests are our interests. Quality, style, and price make our gowns easy to sell to your discriminating trade. You are situated so that we can supply you unfailingly and immediately. Gowns shipped today, reach you tomorrow morning. You realize that this service means you can carry a representative stock in your store, depending upon us to replenish your stock within twenty-four hours after you have made sales. The result, for you, is a small investment with large profits, made possible by our highly organized and always dependable service.

Very sincerely yours,

Defective order.—In case of an incomplete or indefinite order, the customer must never be made to feel that he is at fault. Additional information can always be tactfully drawn. The customer is made to feel that further information is necessary to avoid delay and to assure his getting the exact quality he desires. The object of the inquiry is to give prompt, efficient service. A good plan for such a letter is:

1. Thank the customer for the order.
2. Courteously ask for further information.
3. Sell your request by showing that it is made solely with the customer's interests in view.

(1)

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your order of October 10.

The size you desire was omitted from your order for M-289, suède gloves.

Please send us this necessary information so we can fill the order exactly as you want it. As soon as we hear from you, we can release the order for immediate shipment.

Very truly yours,

(2)

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your order of November 5, just received.

We regret that we are unable to make shipment without further information.

Please give us the catalogue number, size, and price of the shoes you wish.

Do you wish them sent by parcel post or express?

We are holding your check until we hear from you.

If you will please fill out the inclosed blank and mail it at once in the inclosed stamped envelope, we shall forward the order promptly and to your complete satisfaction.

Yours truly,

Out of stock.—When the goods cannot be furnished, a personally dictated letter shows consideration. In the case of old customers, where a substitution can be made, intelligently executed on the basis of past experience under similar circumstances, the letter promptly and definitely states the procedure you have followed. If necessary, offer an inducement.

Dear Madam:

Thank you for your order of November 10.

We are forwarding today, by parcel post insured, the ten yards of poplin you ordered.

Realizing your immediate need for this material, we have taken the liberty of sending the poplin in two lengths, 8½ yards and 3 yards, as this is all we have in stock. The new supply will not be available until November 18.

We are certain that you will like this poplin, which is of the best quality, and for which we are glad to accept your check in full payment as for ten yards.

Sincerely yours,

A longer letter is necessary when the item out of stock is ordered by a retail customer who is not a regular customer. Observe the persuasive elements of this good response:

Dear Madam:

Thank you for your order of November 11.

We should like to fill your order for the Fashion Waist, A437, Size 38, but the fact is that we have received more orders than we expected, with the result that our large reserve stock has been completely sold out.

The manufacturer is no longer able to supply this waist, but we are fortunate to have in stock a waist of the same high quality and exquisite style, at a slightly lower price. You will find this waist listed and illustrated in our catalogue, on page 15, A 438. We can send you the waist promptly if we receive your order within a few days. This model is very popular. It is now selling as fast as the model you ordered.

Remember, you are fully protected by our guarantee, "Money cheerfully and promptly refunded if you are not satisfied." We are certain, however, that you will not part with the waist when you see it.

Just write the catalogue number of the waist and the size you desire, on the inclosed Special Order Blank, and mail it to us in the inclosed stamped envelope.

This fashionable waist will reach you promptly if you do not delay.

Very truly yours,

Refusing the order.—When the order must be refused, state the facts in a straightforward, businesslike way. The letter should be unfailingly courteous, so as to leave the way open for future business. In the endeavor to conciliate the customer, avoid extravagant phrasings. Elaboration indicates insincerity. The following opening paragraph contains what is known as "bunk."

Dear Sir:

Our first thought on reading your letter of July 15 was one of delight.

Not only were you giving us a very generous order, but your good business methods strongly appealed to us.

By way of contrast, observe how the following letter cultivates good will at the same time that it refuses the order, without resorting to insincerities.

Dear Sir:

We thank you for your order of July 16, but we are unable to accept it on account of our established merchandising policy.

Our policy includes the granting of an exclusive agency for the sale of our products in a town which has a population of 25,000 or less.

This arrangement assures the retailer a very profitable trade. We already have an established agency in your city.

Although no change is contemplated at present, we take pleasure in keeping your name on our files, and assure you that we appreciate your interest in our products.

Very truly yours,

National advertisers selling exclusively through local dealer agencies must often refuse orders received at the factory. Such orders should be diplomatically referred back to the customer in such a way as to induce him to complete the transaction at the store of the local dealer. The response should be courteous, definite, and complete. A vague letter fails to resell the prospect on the product. An incomplete letter fails to send the prospect to a definite address in his community. When several dealers handle the product in a large community, their names and addresses should be given, the prospect being allowed to choose the store. Observe the sales features of the following letter:

Dear Madam:

Thank you very much for your order of November 5 for one of our electric irons. (*Appreciation.*)

We should like to send you the iron, but as manufacturers we sell only through retail dealers, and never supply irons direct from the factory. (*Explanation of refusal.*)

We are, therefore, returning your check, and refer you to one of the following dealers in your city, who will be glad to deliver the electric iron at the price advertised in the magazine. (*Action taken.*)

You will have the additional advantage of selecting the iron from a large stock, and will avoid the annoyance of delay and possible break-

age because of bad handling on the way from the factory to you. (*Advantages to the reader.*)

Every electric iron is guaranteed by us and the dealer to be in perfect condition. (*Sales talk.*)

The following dealers will be glad to serve you. If you do not care to telephone your order, visit the store and make your own selection.

John Morris & Co., 218 West Seventh Street.
Polk Electrical Supply Company, 424 Main Street.
(*Specific references.*)

You will receive courteous and prompt service if you give your order to one of these stores. (*Suggests action.*)

Very sincerely yours,

Conclusion.

1. Printed forms with fill-in are advisable for routine inquiries, orders, and responses. 2. When the expense of individually dictated letters is assumed, letters should conform to the best practice in structure and language. 3. Every individually dictated letter of response is a selling letter.

Problems for Oral and Written Solution.

1. Why is this letter of inquiry weak? Be specific.

Gentlemen:

Having seen your advertisement in the Sunday *Times* of March 22, and being interested in your set of books because I read a great deal after business hours, especially in history, of which I am very fond, I am asking you to send me the sample pages you advertise. I am inclosing the coupon, which I clipped, and which I hope is properly filled out. Please send me a free copy, as your advertisement says you will.

Yours truly,

2. Does this letter incorporate the structural units of a good response to a request for jobbers' prices? If so, how? If not, suggest specific changes.

Dear Sir:

We are very glad to hear of your new store in your letter of the 8th.

The establishment of a third store certainly proves your success in the other two.

You ask for jobbers' prices. This would, of course, mean jobbers' quantities. Because of the nature of our product and our quick delivery service, we have established the policy of not allowing jobbers' prices—one price to all our customers. I assure you that if we did give special prices you would be one of the first to get them.

It has been our experience that the retailer makes larger profits on smaller shipments. Candy must be in A-1 condition to continue to be sold to the same customers, and you do not want to get the name of selling stale candy.

To assure fresh supplies at short notice, we have built up a reliable quick-time service. I have looked up the express service to your city and find that if we receive your order in the morning mail you are sure to have the candy on your shelves by evening.

We value your trade. Give us your orders as in the past. Please do not make the costly mistake of buying your fine candies in large lots, regardless of the amount you can sell in a month. We have statistics to show what bad results other dealers have got from large-lot shipments. Next time you are in New York, let us show you the evidence.

Very sincerely yours,

3. Criticize this response to an inquiry induced by an advertisement. For what class of reader is it intended? Why?

Dear Sir:

Your inquiry just came in this morning's mail, so I am answering it right off.

You may be anxious to find a good old trout hole or riffle, like those in the Platte River near here, or perhaps you would like to try your luck in Celestial Park, which has a national reputation among anglers. Celestial Park is within easy walking distance.

Then, after your morning of fishing, golfing, or tennis, you would come back to the hotel hungry. "Hungry" is the word, for this hotel is eight thousand feet above sea level, where the invigorating air whets one's appetite to a mighty keen edge.

Our meals are "according."

There are flowered gardens about the hotel. Auto and wagon trails stretch and wind in every direction, and give ready access to woodland and mountain scenery. Drivers and guides are at your service, rates moderate, and plenty of mountain horses to choose from.

Every room is an outside room, with plenty of the good air and fascinating views all about. Electric lights, telephone and telegraph connections, right in the hotel, keep you feeling modern at the same time. The inclosed booklet, with illustrations and prices, will be interesting reading.

I'll be here to receive you myself if you give us the word.

Yours truly,

4. Rewrite the following letters, observing all the requirements of an effective response.

(1)

Dear Sir:

We are in receipt of your favor of the 9th inst. requesting us to supply you with a file of Perlum advertisements.

Agreeable to your wishes, we are forwarding same to our advertising agency, N. H. Peters, to supply you with copies.

Hoping same will serve your purpose and appreciating the compliment that you are interested in our advertisements, we are,

Very truly yours,

(2)

My dear Mr. Mothern:

In answer to yours of the 1st beg to say that we are daily expecting the return of your mortgage from the Title Company. It usually takes from five to six weeks and should be received within a few days.

Very truly yours,

5. (*a*) Show how the response to the following letter fails to meet the inquiry in essentials. (*b*) Write an effective response, retaining whatever details you can, and adding necessary information.

(1)

Dear Madam:

We are looking forward to a vacation holiday on a nice farm and liked your advertisement in the *World Summer Resort Annual.* Can you accommodate us from August 16?

Please state your weekly rate for my wife, my son (nine years), and me.

Can you give us two rooms, one for my wife and one for the boy and me?

As we shall use our automobile, please indicate the best road from Poughkeepsie to your farm.

Yours truly,

(2)

Dear Sir:

Would say I would be pleased to have you with us from August 16. I think you will like it up here, it is pretty country, high and healthful we are near the lake.

Have a clean and comfortable house, large lawn.

Ellsburgh is 87 miles from New York City on N. Y. C. R. R. Fare is $2.99 or you can come by boat & bus via Poughkeepsie for $1.35 (a nice sail up the Hudson and less expensive). When you write to reserve room I will send time tables.

My weekly rate for the three would be $48.

Thanking you for considering my place and looking for an early reply,

Sincerely,

6. As a student of business English, you are interested in manuals of rules and regulations for dictators and transcribers. Progressive manufacturers and business firms print such manuals for the use of their correspondence departments. You are in need of representative manuals as a basis for your investigation of this type of business literature. Your plan is to standardize the practice of large companies throughout the United States and to make known the results in a report.

(*a*) Write a letter to a well-known company, requesting a copy of its manual for correspondents: both dictators and transcribers. Request also additional information about house character, policy, supervision of correspondence, and so forth.

(*b*) Write the letter of response, granting the request.

(*c*) Write the letter of response, refusing the request tactfully because it is against the firm's established policy to send out manuals.

7. You are interested in buying a police puppy. As you have an eight-year-old boy, you desire further information about the habits and traits of police dogs before buying a puppy of this breed. You are sold on his aristocratic appearance, but you have heard that he is a one-man dog. Does this mean that he becomes attached to one member of the family?

Would he not, then, be dangerous with children in the family?

(*a*) Write the letter of inquiry to the Palisades Kennels, Fort Lee, New Jersey.

(*b*) Write the response to your inquiry, using points like the following: police dogs are good natured, especially with children. One customer writes, "Our police dog, Victor, is the inseparable playmate of the baby. They roll over the floor and tumble without a sign of roughness on Victor's part." Police dogs are loyal to the family but dangerous to intruders. Intelligent. Burglar insurance. Understand master's moods. Beautiful color markings in dark or light, as you prefer.

8. Analyze and then rewrite the following inquiry. No address appeared on the letter sheet.

Dear Sir:

I am quite worried and in suspense regarding my deficiency examination in eB7. I tried to get you at your office, and my mark at the Registrars, but both were not in. Please send my mark at once.

Sincerely,

9. As secretary of the Chamber of Commerce in a city of 300,000 population, you are planning to invite a well-known business man in a neighboring city (two hours by rail) to speak at a special luncheon for several hundred local men who are interested in advertising their city.

Write a letter requesting him to talk about half an hour on "How to Advertise the Home City." The talk is to follow the luncheon (12:30). He will be guest of honor. You pay all expenses. The date of the luncheon is Wednesday, November 15, three weeks from to-day. If you can secure this speaker, a successful meeting is assured, and you will add to your prestige as secretary of the organization.

10. Criticize the following request. (*a*) Is the point of view good? Has the "you" attitude been sufficiently stressed? (*b*) Point out unnecessary words and phrases in the first paragraph. Do these make the paragraph flabby? (*c*) Does the body of the letter contain material enough to assure the reader that proper use will be made of his manual? (He will not put his manual, issued for private use, into the hands of irresponsible outsiders. He fears unsympathetic criticism. He wishes to avoid publicity.—Has the writer met and overcome such

obstacles in the mind of the reader?) (*d*) Has the writer pointed out the possible advantages to the reader if the request is granted? (*e*) Is the last sentence of the second paragraph a request or a veiled command? (*f*) Precisely why is the closing sentence weak? (*g*) Has the writer made the most of the material suggested by the first sentence of the last paragraph?

Dear Sirs:

I am studying business English, and in the course of my work I have become especially interested in the correspondence manuals which the more progressive firms are providing for their correspondents, stenographers, and typists. I am anxious to collect as many of these manuals as I possibly can, with the view of studying them very carefully to ascertain just what provisions business firms are making for the supervision and standardization of their business correspondence.

I have been informed that you have a very complete and up-to-date manual which, I am sure, would be of great help to me. Will you please mail it to me.

The fact that you distribute such a manual among your employees leads me to believe that you are interested in promoting better business English. I will greatly appreciate your co-operation with me in an attempt at advancement in this fertile field through a study of what has been done in the past.

Very truly yours,

11. Compare the following sentences with the opening sentence of the letter in the preceding exercise. (*a*) Just how is each sentence more compact and convincing than the original? (*b*) Write an opening sentence for your own letter of inquiry.

(1) In the course of my studies in business English I am making a survey of correspondence manuals provided by progressive firms for their correspondents, stenographers, and typists.

(2) As a student of business English I am interested in correspondence manuals provided by progressive firms for . . .

(3) As a student of business English I am specializing in the study of correspondence manuals provided by . . .

12. In what ways are the following sentences superior to the sentences expressing the same thoughts in Exercise 10?

(1) I am collecting these manuals to make a careful study of modern practice in the supervision and standardization of business correspondence in large offices. (Inferior? I am collecting as many of these manuals as I can to make a successful study of the provisions being made for the supervision and standardization of business correspondence.)

(2) The results of my investigation will be incorporated in a report, which will be filed but not published. No publication, therefore, favorable or unfavorable, can result, because the manuals I shall use as a basis for my report will be referred to anonymously as Manual I, Manual II, etc.

(3) I am encouraged to believe that you will co-operate with me in my undertaking because I am willing to give you, if you so desire, a copy of the report or a personal opinion of how your practice compares with that of others. (Inferior? I am encouraged to believe you will aid me in my efforts to make this necessary survey, because I am willing . . .)

13. Write an order letter to Winthrop and Sons, 43 Win Street, Chicago, Illinois. You need the following seeds immediately: Black Wax Beans, 50 pounds, at $22.50; Golden Bantam Corn, 10 pounds, at $4.00; Egg Plant, 2 pounds, at $8.00; Carrots, Early French Forcing, 2 pounds, at $6.00. You are paying cash. Wohler Hardware Store, Yourtown.

14. Eltman and Company, Fifth Avenue, New York, have received today an order from Elizabeth Fron, 56 Blossom Avenue, Yourtown, for a pleated crêpe Georgette and lace frock. A money order for payment in full ($55.00) was inclosed. Miss Fron failed to state the size of the frock. Write a letter to Miss Fron.

15. Order a Choker and Drop Necklace of pink and white pearls costing $38.50. You are ordering from the mail-order department catalogue of Tippany and Company, New York, and are sending the stated amount. You are writing your letter on November 20. Your mother's birthday is on November 29. You wish Tippany and Company to send the necklace to her so that she will receive it on her birthday. It should be sent by registered mail. If that means extra cost, you will remit, but the order must not be held up.

16. Assume that you are a correspondence clerk in the mail order department of Tippany and Company. On November 26 you write a letter to the person who ordered

the necklace referred to in the preceding exercise. You looked up the mailing distance and found that it was necessary to send the necklace today. There is no extra charge.

20. Point out the strong and weak elements in the construction and phrasing of the following letters of appreciation.

(1)

Gentlemen:

On the afternoon of May 16 the rim of the spider on our ♯9 K Gates crusher broke in three places through the bolt holes.

We immediately wired you to ship us another spider for this crusher, and received your telegram the following day, stating that you had shipped the spider and giving us the car number covering this shipment.

We consider this excellent service and desire to thank you for your promptness in filling the order.

We have been dealing with your company for about twenty years and during this time our crushing plant has not been shut down a single hour due to your failure to furnish our repair parts promptly.

We consider this a record of which you should be proud, and we desire again to thank you for your co-operation in shipping this spider within twelve hours after you received our order.

Yours truly,
Big Rock Stone and Construction Company
Sec. & Treas.

(2)

Dear Sir:

Sometime in your life some friend has done you a "good turn" and finding it hard to control your feelings, your first impulse was to pat him on the back and say, "That's fine! Thank you."

Now that was just the way we felt when we received the applications with your endorsement for Messrs. Ribner and Fischer. We regret on account of distance it is impossible to give you a good "hand-shake" and tell you, personally, how much we appreciate this service.

The enclosed Card Case and emblem, we trust, will partially repay you for your interest in this Association and will undoubtedly encourage you to continue the good work.

Thanking you again for the applications referred to above and anticipating your future co-operation, we are

Yours very truly,

17. Mr. J. Wolper, Wytown, New Jersey, has sent in a generous first order for an assortment of watches of medium price. The order is being filled. As correspondence clerk in the order department of the Wellmade Watch Company, write a letter informing Mr. Wolper that his order will go forward to-morrow. The order will be shipped C.O.D. as requested.

18. Assume that you and several of your friends are planning to spend one month of the long summer vacation in camp on a State or United States park reservation (you to select the desired park). You will travel by automobile and carry your camping outfit on a trailer. You desire authentic information concerning camp sites open to your party. Is a fee required by the government? What limitations are there as to length of stay? What responsibilities do you assume when you camp on public ground? Where can you secure rules and regulations governing campers? Other similar questions will suggest themselves to you. Address a letter to the United States Bureau of Forestry, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., asking for assistance such as is suggested by the foregoing questions.

19. You have noticed the advertisement of the Sportsman's Manufacturing Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in "Outing." With the facts of the preceding problem in mind, write a letter, explaining what you plan to do on your camping trip, the number of persons in your party, and so forth. Ask the service department of the Sportsman's Manufacturing Company to make suggestions as to the most suitable and economical equipment for use on your trip. A member of the party has an option on a trailer, so you will not need to purchase one from the company. Include all facts essential for an intelligent estimate that meets your real needs.

Chapter X

CREDIT LETTERS

The credit letter is a selling letter. Friendliness, an obvious desire to serve, and, when the situation permits, cordiality, impress the customer favorably during those critical days when his credit standing is being scrutinized. When severity is justified, the appeal to coöperation and to the customer's self-interest usually produces results.

Instead, then, of repelling the customer seeking credit, and instead of treating his case in a routine, mechanical letter, the credit man does well to make his message human, always, and, as far as conditions permit, sympathetic. The customer is entitled to individual consideration. The house employing the credit man is entitled to letter-service intelligent enough to build good will, even where sound policy demands that credit be refused.

The selling point of view is especially valuable because credit activity represents one of the most important steps in business procedure. Reliable estimates put the volume of business conducted on a credit basis as high as 85 per cent. Among this vast majority of credit customers are many who need to be restrained from overstepping the bounds of safe credit, and there are others who must be educated to the advantages of discounts and clean credit records. The credit man must sell such fundamentals to the clients of his employer.

Letters are the most convenient medium for these extensive activities because they economically bridge the gap between creditor and distant debtor. Letters, furthermore, as permanent records of credit transactions, offer legal protection in the form of documentary evidence. Equally important is the fact that letters insure privacy for an investigation involving confidential information on the financial and general business status of the buyer.

Definition.—The word "credit" is commonly used to indicate the seller's faith in the buyer's ability to pay for goods delivered to him on any but a cash basis. The word is derived from the Latin verb "credo," which means literally "I believe."

The person selling the goods on credit is the creditor, and the person receiving the goods on the understanding that they are to be paid for within a specified time is the debtor.

The source of credit.—The word "debtor" has unpleasant associations because a debt, however small or honorable, is popularly held to put the debtor under obligation. Often, therefore, credit is considered too exclusively as a valuable service passing from seller to buyer. This conception has been fostered and emphasized by the elaborate and imposing machinery functioning in the credit department. People meet credit men in the flesh and observe the tangible workings of the credit system, but they cannot see credit itself, which is invisible and intangible. The creditor, in addition, occupies the advantageous position in that he need not recognize the buyer's power to purchase. The seller is the final arbiter of credit. In reality, however, credit flows from debtor to creditor, whereas goods move in the opposite direction. Credit represents the customer's power to buy without cash payment. The function of the credit man is to determine whether the buyer has this power or only bravado.

John Burns, for example, owns and conducts a profitable department store in a city of 200,000 population. He owns the modern six-story building which houses his business. The business is adequately capitalized. His turnover is satisfactory and profitable. John Burns is a successful business man who buys merchandise in large quantities. When the credit man of a wholesale dry goods firm passes on extension of credit to John Burns, he recognizes the ability of John Burns to pay after thirty or sixty days. He puts the stamp of his expert approval on John Burns' purchasing power. John Burns is the source of power.

In practice, of course, the credit man applies all the checks at his disposal to assure himself not only that the customer actually *has* this power but also that he *will* have this power, as well as the willingness to pay, at maturity of the account. The credit man must continue his investigations

from time to time in order to protect his firm against contingencies arising from a possible diminution or cessation of the buyer's power. The credit man, furthermore, must establish continuous contact to ascertain whether or not the customer is properly using his power through prompt meeting of his obligations.

The three C's of credit.—Upon receipt of the necessary data, the credit man analyzes the situation, basing his decision on the answers to three questions: 1. Has the applicant *capital?* 2. Has he *capacity?* 3. Has he *character?*

The credit man must know definitely the applicant's financial status. The investigation reveals whether his business is adequately capitalized. It covers such matters as the ratio between assets and liabilities, together with the amount of assets readily convertible into cash.

The applicant's capacity depends upon his opportunities for doing business, his personal aptitude for business, the location of his business, the kind and volume of business, and the like.

His character is determined on the basis of his reputation for fair dealing, moral conduct, personal habits, uprightness, and honesty (past and present).

The credit investigation.—There are several ways of opening a credit account. When the customer takes the initiative, he writes a letter of request to the seller; or he sends in a request for credit with his first order; or he sends merely a first order, leaving further action to the seller. When a dealer has been purchasing on a cash basis over a period of time, and if his constantly growing orders indicate a sound business development, the seller may investigate his financial standing with the object of offering credit accommodations. To increase sales it is often desirable to take such action, on the principle that the cash customer shops about but that the credit customer concentrates his purchases. Whoever takes the initiative, credit should never be granted without first making a careful investigation. At the outset the customer is made to understand that credit is not to be had merely for the asking.

If credit references do not accompany the first order, the dealer is immediately informed that his order is receiving attention but that further information is necessary before the account can be opened. The letter is careful to point out

that this information is invariably requested as part of the customary routine of credit extension. It is well always to stress this point so that the sensitive customer cannot feel suspicious or hurt by the thought that his standing is considered doubtful or that he is singled out for special treatment. A printed property statement (to be filled in) will convince him that the procedure is customary. The essential quality of this type of letter is tact. Statements that may hurt the reader's business pride, or that show suspicion, must be scrupulously avoided. The following letter is negative in tone:

Dear Sir:

We have received your letter of October 10 about opening a charge account. In reply we must inform you that we cannot open an account in your name unless you provide us with references. Moreover, it will be necessary for you to fill out the inclosed credit application form. If all the information we receive is satisfactory, credit will be granted.

Yours truly,

Such a letter is obviously offensive. The statements are tactless and blunt. The language is cold: "have received," "must inform you," "will be granted." The tone is negative from the start: "we cannot open," "unless you." Doubt is implied by "if all the information." Such a letter chills the customer. The following letter is cheerful and positive.

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your inquiry of October 15 concerning the opening of a charge account with us. We are always glad to welcome a new customer. Be assured of our desire to serve you.

You are no doubt familiar with such blanks as the one we are inclosing. All responsible wholesale houses use such forms to secure information that facilitates the opening of an account.

If you will please fill out and return this property form immediately, we shall make the usual inquiries as rapidly as possible and so hasten the opening of your account.

Yours truly,

The following letter is used by a large city bank:

Dear Sir:

We are making the annual examination and rearrangement of our credit records, and find that the last statement received from you is dated . . . We therefore ask that you favor us with a late statement of your assets and liabilities.

As we wish to keep our files uniform, we inclose a statement blank, and ask you to send us the information on this form, if agreeable to you. We assure you that all communications will be treated as strictly confidential, and that it is our desire to serve you at all times.

Very truly yours,
Vice-President.

Credit inquiries and responses.—After receiving the requested information, the credit man follows up the customer's references—and if he has not already done so during the preliminary investigation, looks up the customer's rating in directories like Dun's and Bradstreet's. The letter requesting information from references should be compact, specific, and courteous, and should offer to reciprocate favors. The following letter illustrates these qualities:

Dear Sir:

Your firm has been given as a reference by Mr. Arthur F. Bisdell, 984 South Salina Street, Syracuse, N. Y., who is seeking an account with us, with a credit limit of $200.

Please furnish us with whatever data you may feel disposed to give us, confidentially, concerning your experiences with this dealer.

We shall appreciate an early response, and assure you of our willingness to reciprocate at any time.

Yours truly,

Responses to such requests should be so worded that the writer assumes no responsibility, direct or implied. A typical favorable response follows.

Gentlemen:

We are glad to respond to your letter of October 19, in which you inquire concerning our experiences with Arthur F. Bisdell, 984 South Salina Street, Syracuse, N. Y.

Mr. Bisdell has used our credit facilities, with a limit of $250, during the past three years.

Our records show that he has always met his bills promptly.

Mr. Bisdell is one of our desirable customers.

Yours truly,

Because of the law of libel, the unfavorable response is more cautious and impersonal. Because of the importance attached to opinions from such sources, banks and mercantile agencies are guarded in phrasing unfavorable reports, statements being as a rule general. The name of the dealer or firm is frequently omitted. The following forms are safe:

(*From a trade source*):

Gentlemen:

We regret to state in response to your letter inquiry of October 19 that our experiences with the person you mention have not been sufficiently satisfactory to warrant a favorable report.

During the two years he has had an account with us we have several times had considerable trouble in collecting bills.

Yours truly,

(*From a bank*):

Gentlemen:

We regret to inform you in reference to the person mentioned in your letter of October 19 that our information prevents us from indorsing his credit standing for the amount you mention.

Yours truly,

Cheerful consideration.—The most valuable credit man invariably makes customers feel that they are enjoying personal consideration from the house. He controls the operation of his credit system and gradually modifies it, when necessary, to suit the individual needs of customers.

In actual practice, credit letters frequently overstress the "we" attitude. The seller's point of view dominates. Good will, won by strenuous effort in the sales department, is thus turned into ill will by an unsympathetic letter. That he must protect the firm against the inroads of unscrupulous dealers is obvious. It is, nevertheless, poor policy to limit activities to the negative function of self-protection, important as this is. Successful credit men are blessed with a lively faith that breaks through and transcends the mechanical methods of

routine activities, but without destroying their validity. Without losing sight of the necessity of safeguarding the firm's capital, such credit men guide their practice by a broad vision which enables them to work in coöperation with the sales department for the increase of sales.

Enlightened team work is reflected in credit letters incorporating the qualities of *consideration* and *cheerfulness*. A good credit man brings to his task not only wide and accurate information, power of clear analysis, and rare judgment, but also humanity, an optimistic view of men and business conditions, and power of diplomatic phrasing. "Coöperation is the abundant life of commerce."

The following letters indicate the difference between a credit man who has these qualifications and one who has not. While revising his files, a newly appointed manager sent a request for a financial statement to a good credit customer, of eleven years' standing, who had never furnished a financial statement. The closing sentences of the customer's response were: "I never furnish a financial statement to anyone. You have got along without one from me for eleven years, and you will have to carry on without one." Can such a refusal be diplomatically converted into assent? In many cases it can, if the credit man shows resourcefulness.

The *wrong way* is to antagonize the customer by tactless phrases, as in the letter below, which lacks the first elements of persuasion.

Dear Sir:

I am sorry to note from your favor of January 11 that you misunderstood our request for the necessary financial information we expect annually from credit customers.

At this time each year we mail such requests to all our customers, and they are always willing to supply us with the necessary data.

So far yours is the only refusal we have received.

I cannot understand, Mr. Cuddeback, why you insist in your refusal to acquaint us with your financial condition. We are required to make an annual report to our creditors, and willingly do so.

Although we appreciate your business and have always valued you as one of our preferred customers, and wish to continue to do so, we feel that you should favor us with the financial statement.

Sincerely yours,

The *right way* is to sell the idea to the nettled customer. The new manager realized this opportunity to demonstrate his sales ability. Because of its persuasive, sympathetic tone, the following adroitly planned and phrased letter sold the idea. In this letter, negative statements make way for constructive ideas presented cheerfully and considerately.

Dear Sir:

I am glad of the opportunity your letter of January 11 gives me to explain the request for a financial statement which, I am sorry to note, you feel casts reflections on your excellent credit standing. No reflection whatsoever was intended.

At this time I am revising the credit files and have requested every customer to fill out a form identical with the one sent to you. No exceptions were made, not even in the case of our customers of longest standing. Yours is, however, the first refusal I have received.

We are glad to supply our creditors annually with such information about ourselves as we requested from you, because we feel that we are partners in business when we enjoy credit. Without the cooperation of our creditors we could not do business on our present scale, and therefore we feel they are entitled to know our exact financial condition.

That we value your business is indicated by the unlimited credit we have always extended to you, and by our constant effort to meet your needs promptly. We desire to retain you as a thoroughly satisfied customer.

If it is your final decision not to furnish us with a financial statement, we shall accept your ultimatum, and assure you that we shall not permit this difference of opinion to stand between old friends. We shall always be ready to serve you as in the past.

Very truly yours,

(*Quoted in F. H. McAdow's Mercantile Credits, Ronald Press.*)

Granting credit.—When credit is granted, a cordial letter capitalizes the customer's interest in the firm and its products. The letter formulates the firm's credit policy, but it also seeks to tie the customer to the house by showing him that service is the watchword in all its dealings.

The succeeding letter is unappreciative because it is not cordial in plan or phrasing. It is incomplete because it omits the

indispensable statement of credit policy. The language and point of view are mechanical.

The wrong way:

Dear Sir:

In response to yours of March 12, we beg to inform you that we have opened a credit account in your name and are handling your order under our number 3679, which please note for future reference. Hoping to receive your future orders, we remain

Yours truly,

The right way:

Dear Sir:

We are pleased to extend you, in response to your request of March 12, our most favorable terms, 2/10, net /30.

The information we have received concerning you is so completely favorable to you personally and as a business man that we appreciate your choosing us to supply you with merchandise. Your order is going forward to-day.

You may be assured of our complete coöperation at all times and of our efforts to help you realize larger profits through the quick sale of our goods.

We have packed with your order our latest assortment of window display cards, with full directions how to make the display attractive. At stated intervals you will likewise hear from our business promotion department, which is conducted exclusively for our customers, without charge.

We are looking forward to pleasant business relations.

Sincerely yours,

The educational functions of the credit man.—The educational functions of the enlightened credit man demand his continued interest in customers. Even after credit has been granted, the alert credit man keeps close watch of the customer to detect signs of weakness in the three C's of credit. His alertness is prompted not only by the instinct of self-preservation, but also by a genuine desire to give service. As a prominent credit man has well said, the credit man should do more than function at the autopsy of a defunct business which foresight and coöperation could have saved. If the dealer fails, the creditor firm loses some money, but the dealer

is ruined. Timely expert advice often steers a dealer from the rocks of bankruptcy, and the dealer gains more than the creditor.

His wide knowledge of business conditions in general, and his intimate understanding of the individual problems of the firm's customers, make the credit manager an expert and confidential business adviser to customers. He has valuable information which the dealer has not but which, to safeguard their common interests, are used for the dealer's benefit.

The progressive credit manager who gives his customers warning of impending bad trade conditions and who, on the other hand, informs them of better conditions, wins and establishes good will and friendship. His position is that of friendly counselor and adviser. Customers whose liabilities have grown into a dangerous proportion to assets are not offended when the credit man, insisting on sound business principles, curtails credit until the storm has been weathered. These same customers know that under more favorable conditions they will enjoy expansion of credit.

The letter quoted below is a good example of how to handle a customer attempting to exceed his credit limit. Observe how tactfully the educational material is brought forward. The letter, however, would not be as effective as it is if the writer had not found an almost perfect plan. Observe, furthermore, that the request is refused, but that the writer nevertheless throws light on darkness by finding an accommodation which does not jeopardize or invalidate his main contention. The letter, therefore, although it carries a refusal, is at the same time cheerful in a very real business sense. It should be observed that the writer is firm and frank, at the same time he is friendly.

Dear Mr. Homan:

I have tried every way possible to convince myself that it would be right for me to pass for shipment your order given to Mr. Brown when he called upon you last week, but I simply can't do it until you have been able to reduce your present open account.

I know you will be disappointed, but I do not want you to feel at all hurt. It is not a question of confidence in you—our past relations show that. It is simply not discreet, in the present trade conditions, to carry an open account of more than $3000 for a store doing your

volume of business. I have been strongly tempted to put this order through, because of my great respect for you personally, but my better judgment tells me it would do neither of us good.

As none of your April invoices will be due for some weeks, I suggest that you send us a thirty-day note for their total, $1,127.32, which will permit us to fill out the present order at once.

You may feel we are being too stiff over this matter—but if you will think it over, I believe you will see that what is a safe credit for us to give is a safe credit for you to take, and anything over that is a bad indebtedness for you to assume in the present state of the market.

I hope that you will see the matter in this light, and that I will hear favorably from you as to the notes for the April invoices.

Faithfully yours,

(*Quoted by permission from S. Roland Hall's "Handbook of Business Correspondence."*)

Analysis of this letter reveals the following headings:

(1) Subject stated. (2) Reason explained. (3) Practical suggestion. (4) Appeal to customer's sense of good business policy. (5) Practical suggestion stressed and action stimulated.

Refusing credit.—To urge that a letter refusing credit should be written so as to make a friend, sounds like giving counsel of perfection. Nevertheless, the applicant must be convinced that the refusal is made with his best interests in mind and that some other form of purchase is at present to his advantage. Educational material can be used to show how a smaller volume of cash purchases is more businesslike under present conditions, or how cash on delivery is better policy. The same tactful approach used with an old customer can be used with the new customer who has sent in his first order. By educating a customer to begin in a modest way and to build up his business on one of the forms of cash purchase, the credit man performs one of his most valuable functions, that of increasing the volume of sales. With sympathetic encouragement, many a cash customer has in this manner fought his way eventually to a liberal credit allowance with a desirable house. The letter, then, that refuses credit should be just as tactful and cordial as the letter that grants it—but in addition it should be persuasive.

The wrong way:

Dear Sir:

In reply to yours of the 18th inst. we are sorry to be compelled to state that we must have your check before filling your order. Although we do not doubt your ability or honesty as a business man, nevertheless the information we have received is such as to justify us in requiring cash with the order.

We, therefore, hope you will remit so we can fill your order promptly. Hoping to receive your check, we are

Yours truly,

The right way:

Dear Sir:

We thank you for your business statement of March 1, and also for the references, which we have used.

We are gratified to observe your interest in our goods, and have noted that your references are without exception flattering to you personally. It appears from a study of your assets and liabilities that you are, frankly, somewhat under-capitalized. We feel it our duty to speak of the dangerous proportion of your resources to your liabilities. With your personal ability and the favorable location of your business, it seems to us merely a question of a short time before you will be able to put additional capital into your business.

Meanwhile, if you can secure an addition of $2500 to your capital, we shall be glad to fill your order. Our well-considered advice, however, is that you cut down the order by one half at present, and that you advise us to ship you on a cash basis, subject to our usual 2% discount. We can then forward the remainder in supplementary shipments, in case you find that your volume of trade warrants these. We believe you will find this arrangement sufficient for your present needs.

As soon as your business justifies an extension of credit, we shall be glad to coöperate with you. In the meantime we are glad to give you our best advice and our most favorable cash terms.

We are certain that this arrangement will appeal to you as temporarily satisfactory, and assure you that we are ready to make immediate shipment if you will give us a favorable reply.

Very sincerely yours,

Analysis of the foregoing letter reveals the following plan for a letter refusing credit:

1. State the subject cheerfully. Acknowledge receipt of information from customer and other sources.

2. Explain the situation frankly but sympathetically. Begin with the favorable elements, and then tactfully (not apologetically) lead into the less favorable aspects. Avoid vague statements.

3. Indicate your solution of the problem. Make a definite, practical suggestion.

4. Retain good will by an appeal to the customer's sense of sound business policy.

5. Offer your coöperation. Stress the practical suggestion, and stimulate action.

The value of a firm credit policy.—Whether credit is granted or refused, the tone of the letter is always firm and dignified, and the point of view is determined by the customer's interests. The first credit letter received by the customer motivates all later correspondence. It indicates clearly the firm's credit policy. To do this effectively, it must be specific and definite in stressing the importance of credit in business. Close attention to motivation removes the possibility of future misunderstanding in case collection letters become necessary. A vague, mechanical statement that credit has been extended may lead the customer to believe that the seller is lax in his methods.

To prevent misconception and unpleasant eventualities, the first letter is specific in limiting the amount of the credit allowed, in stating the time limit on due bills, and in rehearsing briefly but frankly the salient facts of the credit investigation. The customer should feel that his references have been carefully consulted and that his rating has been investigated. He feels flattered to know that he has successfully passed a rigid investigation by a firm strict in its credit policies. At the same time he is impressed by the necessity of meeting his bills promptly if he hopes to enjoy continued good standing. Severity is negative, but firmness is indispensable. The tone is friendly and coöperative.

Observe, in the following letter, how the credit correspondent shows firm but friendly coöperation with an old customer experiencing temporary difficulty on account of a fire which cleaned him out. The letter impresses the customer with the seller's desire to serve, but it at the same time reveals

unmistakably yet tactfully that the credit man is keeping himself informed.

Dear Sir:

We are glad that on May 1 we were able to give you an extension of time on your account of March 20 for $197.88.

We realized then, as we do now, that a fire always means a temporary loss of trade, merchandise, and money. We showed our willingness to be of service on May 1, and we want to show it again now.

We understand that your insurance money is due about July 11. We shall, therefore, be glad to extend your time for payment to July 15.

Any order which you may care to send in before that time will be carefully attended to, and the bill deferred until July 15.

Sincerely yours,

Avoid bunk.—Care should be exercised not to overstress the cordial element through use of effusive phrases, tending to arouse suspicion of the writer's sincerity. Too much stress, for example, is placed on gratitude in the following opening sentence. In his attempt to be cordial the writer bends over so far that he loses his balance.

Insincere: We are *indeed* glad to have your good letter of July 3, and are *very grateful* for the opportunity *you have given us* to explain our policy regarding discounts.

The unnecessary repetition of the *glad* idea in *grateful* can be avoided if *because* is used in place of the vague *and*. This substitution, furthermore, eliminates the unfortunate implication, in *you have given us,* that the customer has inadvertently given the writer an advantageous opening.

Better: We are glad to have your letter of July 3 because it gives us an opportunity to explain our policy regarding discounts.

Definite statements.—Definite statements containing specific information are always more considerate and convincing than vague generalizations. The recipient prefers facts to vague generalizations. Vague statements result from the weak use of *hope* and *trust*. In the paragraph giving a bit of sales talk on the first order, secure conviction by selecting phrases strong enough to make an impression.

Weak: We hope your customers will note the high quality of our goods.

Better: We are positive that . . . *or* We are certain that . . . *or* We feel sure that . . . *or* We are confident that . . . *or* The experience of other dealers handling our goods assures us that your customers will note the high quality of our goods.

Vague: Our credit and service departments will arrange everything for you.

Better: Our credit and service departments attend to all details of promoting sales for you. (*or:* . . . work out plans for promoting your sales.)

Vague: We will send the ordered goods promptly.

Better: The goods you ordered are being shipped today. (*or:* . . . will be shipped not later than tomorrow.)

Vague: Thank you for your order and the inclosed check.

Better: Thank you for your order and the check for $93.10.

Conclusion.—The letter extending or refusing credit is a selling letter. Service is the keynote of credit letters.

Problems for Oral and Written Solution.

1. (Credit extension—unsolicited) Mr. J. C. Berens, 76 Oklahoma Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma, hardware merchant, has done a cash business with your wholesale hardware supply house for six years. During this time his orders have increased in size from season to season, but not to an extent warranted by the growth of his business. You have investigated Mr. Berens and find that he has a high rating. While acknowledging his present order to the amount of $619.75, offer him credit facilities on your regular terms, 2/10, n/30. He has not applied for credit. His standing is so good that you have not yet placed a definite limit upon the size of his orders. The purpose of unsolicited credit extension is to induce the customer to concentrate his purchases. Are you going to let this appear in the letter, or only in the spirit in which you write to him? Write the letter.

2. (Credit refused—cash basis offered) Assume that you are credit manager of the Eastern Importing Company, New York, and that the following letter has come to your attention.

Gentlemen:

Please send us your latest catalogue of fall importations with your best prices.

For our business standing we refer you to the Union Trust Company, of Appleton, Wisconsin, and to the Paris Fashion Company, of New York.

Yours truly,
Petite Parisienne Gowns, Inc.
(Appleton, Wisconsin.)

(*a*) Your investigation reveals that the applicant is a poor risk. Write the letter, offering cash terms (check with order) and prompt delivery.

(b) You now have before you the response to your letter, containing an order totaling $398.85, and requesting C.O.D. shipment.

Write a letter in which you thank them for the order and explain that it is your policy to have a ten per cent advance payment to insure good faith when C.O.D. shipments are made to distant points. You are making up the order on the assumption that a favorable reply is forthcoming. (Or: you have the shipment ready to go forward.) Be persuasive.

3. (Persuasive letter—fire insurance) As credit manager of Staart, Hafner, and Max, manufacturers of men's clothing, Chicago, Illinois, you have noted that the Davenport Men's Furnishing Company, Davenport, Iowa, has allowed fifty per cent of its fire insurance on goods in stock to lapse. As your company is carrying a large account from season to season, you are disturbed by the lapse of so much fire insurance. Write the company, urging the taking out of new policies to cover the credit risk you are taking.

Credit depends on adequate insurance. Failure to protect himself against fire loss is frequently taken as an indication that the merchant's business methods are more or less loose. When his stock is properly insured, the merchant can pay his obligations in case of fire, and give himself a fresh start too. The cost of insurance is an expense item to be figured into the cost of selling goods. It is poor policy for the merchant and for you to economize by carrying a fire risk. Perhaps you can help him get a lower rate. Ask whether the local rate is excessive, and what the rate is.

Write the letter with the object of securing a favorable response. Be firm but friendly. Use facts like those in the preceding paragraphs.

4. (Order released—write for references) Johns and Docier, 258 Flint Street, Topeka, Kansas, sent in a grocery order amounting to $168.40. Although this is their first order, they submitted no statement or references. Because the preliminary investigation, based on data in your mercantile rating books, showed a high rating, the order was passed for immediate shipment, as requested.

(*a*) As credit correspondent in the credit and collection department of Hight and Hight, Wholesale Grocers, 40 Water Street, Chicago, you are now writing to Johns and Docier, requesting that they fill in the inclosed property statement and supply the usual bank and trade references. Johns and Docier seem to be desirable customers. Acknowledge their order and state the action you have taken. Welcome them as new customers. Ask for credit information. Anticipate objections that might stand in the way of a favorable response.

(*b*) Assume that Johns and Docier have complied with your request. Write to the two wholesale grocers they have given as references, asking for the necessary credit information.

5. As correspondent in the credit department of the Stateson Hat Company, Danbury, Connecticut, you are asked to write a letter to Arthur Penrhyn, Cornell, Iowa, who has asked your company to install a hat department with a representative stock of autumn and winter hats.

Mr. Penrhyn, three years ago, added men's furnishings to his tailoring business. He has done well, but feels that he can increase his sales by starting a hat department. He submitted a complete statement with references. As his store is favorably located to secure the profitable student trade of the local college, he feels that he is sure of success once he has a start. Salesmen have approached him several times with an offer to stock him, but he knows that the Stateson hat has the surest chance of winning student trade.

He lacks capital for the expansion. Your company sells on a strictly credit basis only, to properly financed dealers. Could he find a partner with capital? You have given his request

serious consideration. His assets are not sufficient to warrant expansion at this time. Unwise expansion now would jeopardize success he has already made.

Although you must refuse him now, urge him to save enough to begin in a small way next season. Add a sales paragraph to keep him sold on your hats. Tell him he cannot get the merchandise desired by his trade unless he has capital enough to discharge his obligations at maturity.

6. As credit manager of the Bonhope Toilette Requisites Company, you are personally handling the credit problem of Dye Brothers' Department Store, Denver, Colorado.

The Bonhope Company has been selling a fair order each season to this store. During the last three months disquieting reports have been made about the financial standing of Dye Brothers. Most companies have cut down on shipments to Dye Brothers, and conservative houses have refused to grant further credit. These companies are relying on reports from mercantile agencies as well as on rumors.

Your salesman in the Denver territory has made a quiet personal investigation which reveals that Dye Brothers, with plenty of money, have been caught in their building expansion by the rising cost of material and labor. Their money is temporarily tied up in the construction of a new building.

Write a letter to Dye Brothers. Tell them frankly that you know other companies have cut down or shut down on orders. You will ship merchandise to the extent of their needs. Grant an extension of time. Dye Brothers must, however, pay interest. The letter must be dignified, firm, and yet friendly. Your immediate aim is to cultivate good will. Your ultimate aim is to put your company in a position to get the major part or perhaps even the entire toilet requisites business of this large department store.

7. John Miller, aged twelve, has written to the International Postage Stamp Company, Riverhead, New Jersey, requesting a set of stamps mounted on approval sheets. The value of the stamps is about thirty dollars. John Miller plans to sell stamps to his schoolmates and neighborhood acquaintances, many of whom are making stamp collections. He specified approval sheets containing low and medium-priced stamps.

Write a letter to the boy, Palisade, New Jersey, explain-

ing your policy. You do not send approval sheets whose value is in excess of five dollars unless a minor has the signature of his father or some other responsible person as security for a larger amount. As a large part of your business is with young people, write so as to secure a favorable response. (Compare the letter on page 238 for an appropriate style in letters to children.)

8. Assume that ten days ago you filled and shipped a first order to John Black, Buffalo, Wyoming. He did not submit references, but has since supplied them. You have investigated his three references, which reported favorably. You are about to write a letter notifying Mr. Black that you have extended the credit for which he asked with his first order. You are credit correspondent in the office of the Omaha Wholesale Hardware Company, 14-26 Bulletin Street, Omaha, Nebraska. Write the letter.

How many letters have been written to date in connection with the opening of the account for Mr. Black?

In a sentence for each state specifically the function of each letter.

9. A first order from A. C. Bird, hardware merchant, Oswego, New York, for a miscellaneous shipment of carpenters' tools, was referred to you, the credit manager of the Hartman-Seals Company, Buffalo, N. Y. Mr. Bird wants immediate shipment. Building is brisk, he reports. The order is for $180.67. You found his rating to be good and approved the order. The shipment went forward yesterday. Write Mr. Bird the kind of letter the situation demands.

10. Mr. A. J. Burton, Rome, N. Y., has requested credit with his first order for boxed chocolates from the Metropolitan Candy Company, Boston, Mass. He submitted a financial statement and references, both of which you have found satisfactory. The merchandising policy of your company allows an exclusive agency for your candies in cities with a population of 50,000 or under. As you already have a satisfactory agency in Rome, N. Y., you must refuse Mr. Burton's request. Analyze the following sentences. Are they appropriate in the letter of refusal? Why look up Mr. Burton's references? Do these sentences show that the Metropolitan Candy Company is a good business builder? After you have

answered these questions, write the complete letter to Mr. Burton.

(1) I am filing your letter, and if for any reason our agent should discontinue handling our goods, or if the population of Rome should exceed 50,000, we shall be happy to enter negotiations with you, as I feel sure our business relations would be mutually profitable.

(2) Should any change in our policy, or future conditions, reveal the need of another agent in Rome, you may expect to hear from us.

(3) Nevertheless, we are glad to place your reference information on file, and should an agency opening occur at any time in the future, we shall promptly inform you.

(4) To place ourselves in a position to be of immediate service to you in case we should later make a change in your city, we have investigated your credit references.

(5) We are genuinely sorry that our house policy does not permit us to enter into active business relationship with you at this time.

11. Criticize and rewrite the following sentences from credit letters. In each case give a specific reason for your revision.

(1) To a new customer who has failed to deposit ten per cent with his order to the nurseryman: In view of the fact that we have received no reply to our letter of December 10, acknowledging your order of December 6, we find it necessary to tell you that unless we receive an immediate reply with the ten per cent cash required against trees which we hold on order, we shall have to cancel your order and release the trees to some other customer.

(2) (*a*) We hope you will have full confidence in our fall hats. (*b*) We are certain that your confidence in us is not misplaced and that your customers will be more than satisfied in every respect with our latest design of fall hats.

(3) Hoping that you will send the necessary references by return mail so we can fill your order soon, we are, yours truly.

(4) We hope that we will hear from you favorably about the required property statement.

(5) Hoping that you will fill out the property blank as suggested and thanking you in advance, we are, yours truly.

(6) We are greatly pleased indeed to have your generous order so kindly placed with our Mr. Kincaid last week.

(7) Dear Sir:

Everything has been O.K.'d in this office, Mr. Burns, and your request for a line of credit, as per yours of the 5th inst., has therefore gone through, so that you may hereafter feel assured of our continued interests in your business.

Hoping for repeat orders on men's furnishings, we beg to remain, (Write a modern letter to Mr. Burns, dealer in dry goods and men's furnishings, Annabel, Missouri. State your credit terms.)

(8) Rephrase the following sentences to make them sound more convincing: (*a*) Perhaps our sales helps *would help* you increase your profits. (b) You will find our credit terms, 3/10 n/30, quite satisfactory, we are sure.

(9) We are looking forward to many years of mutually pleasant and profitable business relations between us.

(10) Revise the following sentences for compactness (adjectives and adverbs weaken this paragraph): Various trade journals show that you are favorably situated in a growing locality where a great deal of building is now going on. This lively construction, without a doubt, creates a great demand for carpenters' tools, especially reliable hammers. Frequent reports from our customers tell us unmistakably that our hammers are of a superior quality. This certainly will insure you ready and prompt sales and also at the same time satisfied customers.

(11) Which form is preferable? Why? (*a*) We took the liberty of sending your goods C. O. D. rather than delay shipment. (*b*) We decided to send your goods . . .

(12) We are taking the liberty of sending you a property statement to be filled out.

(13) Our present policy demands that all customers must fill out a property statement before credit can be extended.

(14) Our terms are two per cent discount, if paid in ten days, net thirty days.

(15) Revise the following vague sentences from letters to a new customer: (*a*) Our customer business promotion department will be only too glad to assist you in any way possible and at any time. (*b*) You will find our business service department and credit department ready to assist you in every way possible. (*c*) We prefer obtaining information like this direct from the customer and know you will appreciate why we do it.

12. (To a cash customer who is prospering):

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your order of February 20 with the check for $187.60. The goods were shipped yesterday by American Railway Express, according to your instructions.

We have appreciated your orders, and to facilitate future transactions we desire to offer you the advantages of an open account with us.

Our favorable terms of 3/10, net 30, are at your disposal whenever you care to use them with future orders.

You may be assured of our interest in your prosperity and of our endeavor to serve you as in the past.

Very truly yours,

13. Compare the blunt and the considerate form, and point out what makes one blunt and the other considerate, in material used, arrangement, phrasing, etc.

Blunt: Your refusal to comply with our request for a financial statement confirms the adverse reports we have received from many quarters concerning your financial standing. Business discretion would justify our refusal to fill your order on any but a cash basis. You may wish to withdraw your order; if such is the case, it will be satisfactory to us.

Considerate: In your case the unfavorable reports which have been coming to us force us to insist upon the statement before we are able to fill your order. Do not think your case an unusual one. We simply do not have sufficient favorable information at hand upon which to base credit. We trust you will appreciate our desire to coöperate with you and thus enable you to receive the ordered goods promptly.

14. (To a customer whose order has been held up because he refused to submit a financial report.)

Gentlemen:

We greatly appreciate the frank, straightforward manner in which you replied to our letter asking for a property statement. A good understanding of the other man's point of view often leads to a mutually satisfactory agreement.

It is an established policy of our firm to request a property statement from all our customers. The information we receive in this way is strictly confidential.

Our credit department, by an analysis of the statement sent in by our customers, is often able to suggest plans enabling the customer to enjoy the most favorable credit terms.

You are one of our most valued customers. We have a personal interest in your welfare. Unsolicited information has come to us from several sources stating that your credit standing is unsatisfactory.

Your fair and honorable treatment of us in the past, and the excellent credit rating you have always maintained with our firm, have led us

to believe that you will be anxious to refute any statements which have been made to your discredit.

In view of the foregoing facts, I am sure you will want to give us substantial evidence of your good financial condition by filling out the inclosed property statement. We are just as anxious to have this gossip silenced as you are.

Very truly yours,

15. Criticize the tone of the opening paragraph of the following letter in response to one from the dealer who complained because his first order had been sent C.O.D. Prepare a good opening paragraph. Rewrite the letter.

Dear Sir:

Congratulations on your financial condition.

On your order you specified immediate delivery. Since we had no financial statement or references from you, we had to ship the goods C. O. D. This is a house policy. We pursue the same course in every similar case.

We feel sure that you will fill out the inclosed blank and mail it in the inclosed stamped envelope. We are glad to do the same for houses with which we deal.

Yours truly,

16. Analyze the following letter. Point out its good qualities. Phrase the corethought in a compact sentence.

Mr. Richard Debtor,
Debtor & Co.,
Roeville, Ind.

Dear Mr. Debtor,

I am mighty glad to learn from your letter just received that you are going into the fall business with as excellent prospects as you anticipated when you called here three weeks ago and placed that very nice order with us. It is certainly pleasant to get good news like this from a friend.

You tell me that you have invested in an auto truck for your business and that you are able to save storage charges by housing it in your own factory building. I am sure that you have calculated well and that the truck will cut down your expenses.

I wonder, however, whether you have had your insurance reviewed by your insurance broker in Roeville. You were so courteous in tak-

ing my advice as to insurance a year ago that I venture to suggest now that you go over the policy with your broker and make sure that there are no mistakes in it.

The fact that you now have an automobile in your factory building will, I think, change the rates somewhat on your policy, and in fact may even invalidate it entirely in case of fire.

I know you too well to think that you will resent this suggestion. In fact, I have at various times suggested to our good customers that it is well to have insurance policies revised from time to time in order that in case of fire damage the policy does what it is intended to do, namely, protect all concerned.

With good wishes for a big season, I am

Cordially yours,

B. N. Serviss.
Credit Manager.

17. Criticize the following letter from a large New York department store. Rewrite the letter.

Dear Madam:

We notice it is your custom to purchase goods from us on a cash basis, which method is not always considered the most convenient by our patrons.

If you prefer to have the advantage of a charge account, we shall be pleased to add your name to our list upon receipt of the inclosed card with your name and address affixed.

Kindly permit us to take this occasion to express our appreciation of past favors, the continuance of which it shall be our endeavor to merit.

Yours very truly,

Credit Manager.

Chapter XI

COLLECTION LETTERS

The relation between credits and collections is intimate. When the customer fails to honor his indebtedness at maturity, his account automatically becomes past due. Having passed upon the account at the beginning and having kept in touch with it since, the credit man is familiar with the business standing of the debtor. In most firms, therefore, collections are handled in the credit department. When a separate department is responsible, the two departments must necessarily work in close coöperation.

Because of the human factor in business, the most carefully devised system of credit supervision does not always detect conditions militating against prompt payment. The credit investigation eliminates as many as possible of the bad risks and poor risks at the outset. Undetected factors or changing conditions are responsible for the customer's failure to pay. To collect as expeditiously as possible, the credit department continues to function by means of collection letters.

Grouping credit customers for collections.—To begin with, at the date of maturity the credit man knows simply that the customer has not met his obligation. Collection letters are then utilized to call the debtor's attention to the overdue account. As all failures to pay cannot be traced to the same cause, it is important to discover in which of the following groups the debtor can be classified. This grouping does not include customers who are verging on insolvency or who are discovered to be fraudulent, because letters to such customers are not, strictly speaking, collection letters.

1. Customers who overlook accounts simply because of negligence or poor business methods.

2. Customers who disregard due-dates because of the smallness of the account.

3. Customers who disregard due-dates because they can

"get away with it," or (and) because it is more profitable to them to use the creditor's money than the bank's.

4. Customers who take advantage of unearned discounts because they can "get away with it," and because it is profitable to them to take these discounts.

5. Customers who are temporarily slow (but who usually pay on time). They can pay on time when the due-dates of the creditor's bills coincide with the seasonal high points in their own business, and they make the creditor wait when these periods do not coincide.

6. Customers who are chronically slow.

7. Customers who are temporarily embarrassed, owing to local or general trade conditions: for example, strikes, crop failures, general depression, and so forth.

Definition.—"A good collection letter is one that obtains the payment of a past-due account and retains the good will of the customer." [1]

Business service in collection letters.—The immediate object of collections is to obtain payment. While accomplishing this purpose, the collection man must retain the good will of the customer so that future sales are not jeopardized. Good will can be retained by rendering business service, which represents one of the highest forms of salesmanship. If rightly practiced, it ties the customer to the seller by creating a strong bond of friendship. The seller works sympathetically with the debtor, pointing out his difficulties and helping him constructively to overcome them. Intelligence, tact, sound judgment, a constructive view of business in general, and sympathetic consideration of the individual case are prerequisites to success in writing collection letters incorporating practical suggestions intended to be of help to the customer. These qualities are revealed in the following helpful letter from a shirt manufacturer in Pennsylvania to a dealer in a small town in Oregon.

Dear Sir:

We learned with regret from your letter of May 25 that business has been bad with you and that you are at present operating at a loss.

[1] This definition, together with the preceding grouping of credit customers, is taken from "Effective Collection Letters" by Tregoe and Whyte (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1924). Many of the specimen letters quoted in this chapter are from the same book.

Of course, we all realize that you cannot continue to lose money and that something will have to be done, if the business which you expect the middle of this month does not materialize.

On an expense of $650 a month your sales should amount in the gross to about $2600, so it is our suggestion that you look into every penny of these expenses to see if they cannot be cut down to a very large extent.

No doubt, you have more shirts than you need. We shall take back and credit unbroken lots, provided they are in good condition. Please write us at once what goods you intend shipping back, so that we may look for them.

We know you realize that the situation is serious, but on the other hand, we feel that it will be best taken care of in your own hands and that you will do everything possible to increase sales and reduce expenses.

Please keep us posted closely as to developments.

Yours very truly,

Cheerfulness in collection letters.—The helpful tone of the preceding letter results from optimistic and constructive consideration of the customer's predicament. The negative-minded credit man, on the other hand, becomes suspicious the moment he scents trouble. By losing patience and judgment, and applying the full rigors of the collection system, he may easily change the customer's discomfort into distress. When the customer is temporarily embarrassed, the collection man can help him by throwing light on dark places, which are usually so black that the customer cannot penetrate them without the expert advice of the creditor's man whose function it is to analyze and interpret financial statements with a view to bettering the customer's position.

Consideration in collection letters.—Genuine consideration of the customer's business needs, in so far as credits are involved, is reflected in the writer's ability to visualize his customer, make his letter fit the individual, and adapt his language by use of the "you" attitude. Stereotyped insincerities should be avoided.

Visualize the debtor.—The first step in successful visualization establishes the type. Is the customer a dealer in a small town or large city? Is his business large or small? The second step individualizes the customer. What are his sales, the ratio of cash sales to credit sales, his capital, indebtedness, etc.? As sources of information, the resourceful

writer consults the files, traveling salesmen, and the customer himself. The following paragraph shows the right attitude:

We want to thank you for sending us the statement showing your condition as of January 1, and also for telling us of the conditions existing down there, and of your ambitions for the ensuing year. There isn't any question that you have the determination to get all the business there is that is coming to you, and when all is said and done, the determination to do a thing is about two thirds of it.

If sufficient data are lacking to make a tolerably complete visualization, protective phrases like the following can be used, which cannot give offense, but which do make a favorable impression because they indicate the effort to consider carefully the debtor's individual case. The following paragraph is from the middle of a creditor's long business service letter to a hardware dealer.

If you do not have slow movers or stickers on your shelves—then are you advertising, are you creating good will among your customers and prospective customers? I don't want you to take exception to these questions. Since I have never seen your store, I don't know what kind of a business you have. Some of these questions might not apply to you at all. But on the other hand, if any of them do, I sincerely hope that this letter will be helpful.

The following paragraph is the second from the last in a creditor's long business service letter to a furniture dealer. The protective phrases used in this and the foregoing paragraphs are especially conciliating when reports from road salesmen or district agents are not available as helps to visualization.

Of course I haven't seen your place and, as I said before, you must have a very nice store. I am not in a position, really, to make suggestions, but it does look as though your expenses in 1923 were entirely out of line. If your volume of business fell to $3000 a month, then it seems that expenses should have been cut because, with the expenses of $1000 a month, it means you have had to average a net profit of 33% on every sale you made in order actually to pay your expenses. Of course, that isn't good business. If sales are still down, I certainly would do everything possible to cut this expense to the very minimum.

Be specific.—The process of visualization uncovers specific material focusing on the case of the individual debtor. Noth-

ing is quite so irritating to the debtor as to discover that his case is, in reality, not being considered, except in a general and perfunctory way. Why so many correspondents fail to tie up specifically with the customer is one of the mysteries of business correspondence. Imagination is not necessary here. All the writer needs is routine information concerning the debtor's paying record, local and general trade conditions as they affect him, his expenses, his sales, his credit accommodations, and so forth. These details are available and tangible. They should be utilized to make the collection letter specific.

Observe how the following paragraph states a general business principle as it affects hardware merchants, and how the principle is immediately applied specifically to the individual debtor.

In the first place, you know that a hardware merchant has to turn his stock three or four times a year before he can make very much money out of his business. With two turn-overs he might possibly get by and not lose any money, but he couldn't make any. In figuring your sales for the year, that is, multiplying your average monthly sale of $812 by 12, your total sales for the year are only $9744. Your stock is $6839.42, so that by the time you have added to this your mark-up or profit on the merchandise, you will find that you have turned your stock actually less than one time. That is the first thing that is wrong—in fact, it is the big thing.

Suppose he had written as follows (after the statement of principle):

It must be that you are not getting the proper rate of turnover, with the result that your business is not profitable.

Such a vague generalization does not point out definitely where the dealer falls short. Confidence in the generalization is not possible because the debtor cannot see the steps leading to the conclusion, and he may even suspect that his case has not been specifically analyzed at all. By using definite figures, known to the debtor, the collection man supplies tangible evidence convincing to the debtor, who welcomes it as expert advice from a friendly source.

Use the "you" attitude.—The importance of the "you" attitude has already been emphasized in preceding chapters.

It is as important in collection letters as in other types of correspondence.

The writer must not become self-conscious in avoiding "we," for the true "you" attitude does not mean the complete or near-complete elimination of the second person pronoun. A letter may have as many "we's" as "you's" and still show more real service than a letter in which the "we's" have been artificially pared down to the irreducible minimum. The true "you" attitude is that of sympathetic consideration. In collection letters, more especially, which of necessity stress the interdependence of creditor and debtor, it is unwise, if not impossible, to limit artificially the use of "we." The following paragraph, for instance, contains four *I's,* and the same perpendicular pronoun occurs four times in the short closing paragraph of this three-page letter. Yet no one can fail to observe that the paragraphs breathe an atmosphere of service. The "you" attitude lies deeper than words.

The financial statement you sent just reached us. I know from the manner in which you write that you desire a frank statement. Now, I am not going to pretend that I can tell you how to correct whatever is wrong with your business, but I do hope to be of some assistance in possibly pointing out to you something you may have overlooked which is now causing you embarrassment in your business.

* * * * *

I sincerely hope, Mr. Wurlley, that something I have said may be useful. I shall very much appreciate hearing from you at any time.

Be sincere.—The collection letter has character if the language expresses the writer's individuality, or, if he must conform to house character, the individuality of the creditor firm. Just as the reader should be visualized, so the letter should bring up before the debtor "a picture not merely of a dictating machine, but of a pulsing human being with strongly defined characteristics."

Mechanical locutions are insincere. They show a cold, formal approach that militates against the possibility of free expression of personality. Stereotyped phrases are especially to be avoided in letters concerned with the debtor's most intimate and confidential affairs, with the very life of his business—capital, liabilities, and methods of conducting his business. The collection man who can do nothing more than

"beg to advise" shrinks from the truth. The fatal issue is that the debtor shrinks from such a man. Mutual confidence, so essential in settling collection problems, is not stimulated by the use of trite expressions.

For the same reason, strained, overcourteous phrasings are to be shunned. When genuinely used, "please," "kindly," and "thank you" never grow wearisome. In this connection the student is asked to refer to the paragraphs discussing "bunk," on page 326.

The following letter, to a debtor who is granted an extension, is not elegant, but it does suggest that the extension is whole-heartedly granted. As an expert has said of this letter, "It has a human, personal, folksy tone that appeals to the debtor" who gets many mechanical letters. Observe its manly directness. There is no straining after the polite effect.

Gentlemen:

The writer wants to thank you personally for your very frank letter of January 25. Everybody is up against it at one time or another. We have been ourselves. That is just exactly why we are going to help you.

Don't worry about that account with us, even if it is past due. Forget it for ninety days. We are going to ask you to sign a note covering that period. By that time things will undoubtedly look better.

We wouldn't do a favor like this for every one, but we know that you are all right. We want you to build up a good busniess, and we are going to help you.

It is a pleasure to have people know that we sell service as well as "best Quality" merchandise.

Just sign the note and return it to us promptly.

Very cordially yours,

Insincere: On looking through our credit files *we were surprised to discover* that your bill of March 7 had not been paid.

The length of collection letters.—A curt request for payment has the sound of a dunning letter. Collection letters should be compact, but as has been explained in a previous chapter, compactness is relative. Although the dealer's time must be conserved, a considerate letter of moderate length on the intimate subject of indebtedness can be relied upon to receive careful reading. This is true, certainly, of debtors

who have replied to collection letters, their replies being evidence that your letters are receiving attention. Letters explaining terms, extension of time, creditor's refusal to allow unearned discounts, and other significant details, are justifiably developed to some length. The foregoing quotations illustrate how expansion of ideas is used to create good will. Business service letters of this type are often as long as three pages. The reason is that analysis of the debtor's financial condition demands simplification, so that the inexpert dealer may have a clear understanding of the situation, and simplification means amplification. Tregoe and Whyte, credit and collection experts, make the following observation in their "Effective Collection Letters"; "In their review of thousands of collection letters, the authors have found that credit men sin against brevity more frequently than against length."

System in collections.—A firm credit policy insures prompt collections. Firmness is doubly valuable at two critical moments in the business relation between creditor and debtor. At the outset, the customer should understand his obligations. The second critical time is the first due date. Observant collection men have noted that new customers very frequently turn up time-worn excuses to feel out the creditor. Their object is to discover whether he is easy in making collections or whether he has a fair but firm policy of insisting that all credit agreements are strictly observed. The customer's respect for a house increases in proportion to its success in holding him to his credit agreements. He will pay promptly where he knows promptness is necessary if he hopes to enjoy continued shipments on a credit basis. He will be lax where he knows he can disregard due dates with impunity.

The secret of successful collections is found in a definite collection policy revealing itself in a collection system that begins to function on the day the customer fails to make payment. A firm but flexible system, suited to the special needs of the creditor's customers, picks up the delinquent customer relentlessly the moment he does not live up to the credit agreement. It does so relentlessly, but not heartlessly, for the object is not only to obtain the money but also to retain good will. The most efficient collection man, therefore, is not the one who collects with the smallest percentage of loss

to his firm. Almost any man could collect due bills with a nearly one hundred per cent score, if obtaining the remittance were the only objective. The problem of collections is not so simple. The best collection man is the one who secures the highest percentage of payments with the lowest percentage of loss of good will. To secure such results, he must be firm and systematic in following up delinquent debtors.

There are two methods of approach: (1) He may use form letters arranged in a collection sequence. (2) He may give the debtor individual treatment. In practice these two methods are found combined in cases where protracted correspondence is necessary.

The collection sequence.—The collection sequence is made up of statements, formal notices, and form letters arranged in a series. The tone of each succeeding unit grows more insistent until a climax is reached.

When such a series is employed, it is important that the timing (the interval between mailings) is properly adjusted to the credit standing of the debtor. The good risk will not receive letters as frequently as the poor risk. In a series of six or seven letters designed for the average debtor, and rising to a climax rapidly, the mailing interval is short, from five days to a week.

The letters to the poor risk are, moreover, more insistent in their demand for money. What may seem a mild letter to the habitually delinquent debtor, who is accustomed to dunning, would seem harsh to a good risk. The rapid-fire timing would also be offensive to the good risk who is temporarily behind in his payments.

The fact is that the form-letter collection sequence is mechanical, in both the construction and phrasing of the individual units and in the operation of the system as a whole. It is not easily adaptable to special cases, of which there are always many. Even the most ardent advocates of the collection series are repeatedly faced with the necessity of changing to individual treatment when the debtor ignores repeated reminders and form letters. In any event, the sequence must be dropped as soon as he responds but does not pay. He may make excuses, or request an extension. Individual treatment is essential for the proper consideration of questions raised in the response.

The collection sequence is, therefore, better adapted for use by department stores collecting from consumers, and by wholesale houses or jobbers having many small past-due accounts. Manufacturers, and wholesalers with a less numerous clientele, find individual treatment more efficient. The reason is that ultimate consumers are, as a rule, unbusinesslike, or at least less awake to the necessity of meeting obligations promptly. Credit extension, moreover, is less definite and explicit between, for example, a large department store and its charge customers. The dealer, however, usually understands the importance of good credit rating. He soon realizes the close connection between prompt payments and quick service in shipment of goods to replenish his depleted stock.

When form letters are used, the collection sequence should be changed from season to season or at least from year to year, so that the customer is not faced repeatedly with the identical letters. As soon as he realizes that he is being bombarded with forms, the message does not "reach" him.

A typical collection sequence of seven units is made up somewhat as follows (for use by manufacturers, wholesalers, and jobbers with many small accounts).

1. A statement is sent when the bill falls due.

2. A second statement is sent after ten days or two weeks (with well-rated customers of department stores after thirty days) with a formal notice (rubber stamped on the statement, or printed on a separate slip which can be attached to the statement) to the effect that the account is past due and that immediate payment will be appreciated. The language of the notice should always be formal, but correct and explicit.

3. A formal printed reminder is sent after ten days (or thirty days with ultimate consumers) have elapsed.

4. With good risks a series of three formal typed letters may now follow with brief intervals between letters. In these form letters the tone grows more insistent from letter to letter. One of the appeals listed and explained below is used in each letter. With poor risks an individual letter is sent in place of the form letters. This requests the reason for continued silence.

5. With good risks an individual letter is sent, requesting payment, or a response stating why the account is not

paid. Note that this letter to the good risk is not sent until after he has received the three formal appeals referred to in the preceding heading. With poor risks, a form letter or individual letter may appeal to the customer's fear by suggesting that the account will be turned over to a collection agency or that a suit will be started.

A collection sequence may be much shorter than the foregoing typical series. A creditor, for example, handling perishable goods where purchases are made constantly and at short intervals, was willing to close out an account in less than one month. The sequence rose to its climax in the third letter, which is dated twenty-four days after the first letter.

(1) February 1:

Dear Mr. Debtor:

The attached statement shows your account to be past due, but what is more important, it shows we are not getting your business, and we want it.

Use your credit with us.

Very truly yours,

(2) February 8:

Dear Mr. Debtor:

In our last letter about your account we mentioned the fact that it was past due, but we stressed the point that we were not getting your business, and we invited you to use your credit with us.

It is not our object to get your money and close your account, but, as it stands, your account is of no benefit to us. We must have payment, and we hope for more business.

Very truly yours,

(3) February 25:

Dear Mr. Debtor:

We have been honestly trying to sell you the idea that we wanted not only payment but also your business as well, and we have invited you to use your credit with us again.

You have neither paid, *nor answered* our letters, so we have turned the account over to our attorneys.

Very truly yours,

The length of the collection sequence and the rising strength of the successive units must be determined by consideration of the kind of business carried on and the type of customer served.

Individual treatment of delinquent debtors.—With the delinquent dealer who does not respond to the second statement, the most effective method is to write an individual letter, calling his attention to the past-due account and requesting immediate payment or an explanation. The advantage of the individual letter is that it usually brings a response, even if not payment. The collection man is then in a strategic position to handle the debtor intelligently and sympathetically. If the first letter obtains no response, additional individual letters may be sent at brief intervals.

When the dealer responds, he may write, for example, that he is temporarily embarrassed and that he desires an extension. A letter like that on page 343 may then be sent. When conditions warrant aid, the creditor should at the very least name a definite date for payment. He may ask the debtor to give a note, which with interest is due on an agreed date. Many customers who are lax in meeting due dates realize their obligation at maturity when a note must be paid. The note, moreover, is an advantage to the creditor in that it affords evidence of indebtedness, in case legal proceedings become necessary. A note, again, is advantageous because the creditor can discount it at the bank. Whatever the policy, it must impress the customer with its fairness and firmness as applied to his individual case.

Appeals in collection letters.—In form letters and individual letters alike, the appeal may be to the customer's sense of: (1) honor, (2) self-interest, (3) business pride, (4) fairness.

1. *The appeal to honor.*—The appeal to honor is very effective if, at the time of credit extension, the customer was fully informed of the terms on which he received credit. If he fails to pay at maturity, he has broken the credit contract to which he bound himself by accepting the shipment on stated credit terms. As the vast majority of business men are honest, there are usually extenuating circumstances which it is the duty of the collection man to discover by means of

correspondence. The fact remains that the contract has been broken because the customer has not met his obligations.

The appeal to honor stresses the contractual obligation. Unless credit men take seriously their duty of educating their customers to a keen realization of the sanctity of credit obligations, the whole structure of modern business is seriously endangered. With fully 85 per cent of business carried on by means of credit, as it is, business men and consumers must be made to feel that it is essential for the welfare of all to observe credit terms scrupulously. Loose credits and lax collections, if tolerated even for a short period, would soon bring about the downfall of business. Credit is faith, and as business is built on credit, business is founded on faith. Genuine faith is impossible where the customer does not take his obligations seriously enough to make prompt payment on due dates. Those who guide the destinies of modern business realize the need of constantly stressing high ideals that awaken and keep alive a high sense of honor in business men. The National Association of Credit Men advocates devices like the following:

Sanctity of the Sales Contract.

The Sanctity of the Sales Contract must be firmly upheld in its every condition and phrase.

The terms of sale as a part of the Sales Contract should be so regarded that it will be considered unfair and dishonest to take unearned discounts and to make unjust claims.

Competition among sellers and buyers should not be based on terms and the abuse of terms, but on prices honestly, frankly, and intelligently arrived at, and on the services promised and performed.

Let American business men, of all business men in the world, be known as the most punctilious in meeting their engagements.

The letter quoted below appeals to the debtor's sense of honor by stressing the justice of the creditor's position. The tone is that of patience and sympathetic consideration. Simplicity in thought and word is the keynote. The appeal is made concrete in the unobtrusive but very effective dramatization of the assumed relations between Mr. A. B. Debtor and Mr. Jones. The "you" attitude prevails throughout, and the letter rises to a significant and specific close that appeals to the debtor's sense of honor. Tested by the essential qual-

ities of a good collection letter, this letter is not found wanting.

My dear Mr. Debtor:

You, as a business man, have often extended credit, expecting that your debtor would pay at a certain time.

If you did not receive payment on the expected date, you sent a statement. After a week or ten days, you mailed another statement—and then another. You had full confidence in your debtor, or you would not have extended the credit. You assured yourself, after getting no response to your first statement, by thinking: "There are many reasons why a man cannot always pay promptly." And after the second statement, you probably thought: "It is strange that I do not hear from Mr. Jones." After no reply to the third statement you must have thought: "Mr. Jones is not much concerned with this account, because, even if he cannot pay, he surely can explain conditions."

To be convinced of Mr. Jones's good intention, you should have then had his explanation or a check balancing his account.

This is the history of our account with you, amounting to $69.19. Will you not convince us of your good intentions?

Very truly yours,

The foregoing letter is commendable for its avoidance of the morally superior tone, which is always offensive because it lacks cheerfulness. The collection man is most effective in the appeal to honor when he respects the debtor's sense of honor. He respects it by assuming that the debtor looks upon his obligations seriously. The foregoing letter is direct without violation of courtesy. The following closing paragraph, on the other hand, from a letter by an inconsiderate collector to a sensitive debtor, antagonizes the reader, who in this instance sent the check, but with the notice, "You can rest assured that it will be the last one."

We are sorry to have to write you such a letter, but we feel it our mission in New York to educate just such concerns as yours in business ethics.

2. *The appeal to self-interest.*—The appeal to the customer's self-interest is often combined with the appeal to honor. The appeal to self-interest shows the customer how his failure to make prompt payment affects his credit stand-

ing not only with your firm but also with other firms. The debtor is persuaded that it will be to his personal advantage to pay now. He is made to feel that if he does not, his credit reputation will be injured. He can be told that your experience with him must be reported to credit bureaus with which you are affiliated, and to other sellers who inquire about him. As nothing is gained by adopting a bullying tone, the appeal to self-interest should be made by simply and unobtrusively informing him of the facts concerning the interchange of credit information between sellers.

Dear Mr. Debtor:

When your account was opened with us, we had every reason to believe that you would pay it promptly when it became due.

In making the usual credit investigations, we discovered that all of those with whom you had done business spoke very highly of you in a personal way, and declared that you would meet your obligations as they fell due.

It is therefore difficult for us to understand why it is that you have not taken care of our account amounting to $74.13.

Before investigating further your manner of making payment to others, in which investigation we would, of course, have to state what our experience has been with you, we want to give you another opportunity to pay your long past-due account with us.

It would not favorably impress those who have recommended you so highly to learn that our experience has not fully justified the unqualified recommendations which they gave us of the way in which you paid your bills.

We shall expect your check by return mail.

Yours very truly,

3. *The appeal to pride.*—The appeal to pride is strong with business men who conduct their affairs in a business-like manner. They are sensitive to criticism implying slip-shod methods. The appeal is strong with well-rated firms or individuals enjoying a high rating. It is employed less frequently in letters to habitually slow and callous debtors, whose business methods are usually loose. The student should observe that the closing paragraph of the following letter is tactful but not apologetic. The tone of this letter to a large well-rated debtor is courteous but nevertheless firm.

Gentlemen:

We wrote you but have not heard from you. We have already allowed you thirty days—an accommodation which we are glad to extend to you. We do not believe, however, that a firm of your standing will delay payment any further without a word of explanation to us—hence this second reminder.

We know that you expect us to be as diligent and systematic in our business methods as you are in your own. We are sure that you will let us hear from you at once.

Very truly yours,

4. *The appeal to fairness.*—The main thought in the appeal to fair play is the golden rule of treating others as you would have them treat you under similar circumstances. Concretely stated, this means that the creditor has delivered satisfactory goods and service and that the customer should in fairness make prompt payment. When the customer is convinced that the creditor is impartial in his dealings with all customers, making no exceptions for a favored few, the appeal to fair play is strong. The creditor's appeal is insincere if he is not playing fair himself. It is sometimes well to reassure a customer on this point.

With the exception of the last illustration, the following examples represent only a few sentences or a paragraph, and not a complete letter.

(1) To a debtor who has not responded to several statements and reminders:

Why not afford us the courtesy you would naturally expect in the event conditions were reversed, and either let us have your check or tell us why we are not entitled to immediate payment in order that proper adjustment may be made on our books?

(2) To a debtor who has not included interest with his remittance:

We are obliged to pay our bills when they become due, and have to depend upon our own receivables being paid promptly in order to do this. When our customers do not pay us, it means that we must borrow money ourselves and pay interest on it in order to carry their accounts. It certainly seems most reasonable to insist that they pay us interest to offset what we are obliged to spend in order to accommodate them.

If you borrow the funds from your banker to pay us, he charges you interest. If, instead, you depend upon us for the accommodation, we are entitled to the same consideration at your hands as you would give your banker, for it is our money you are getting the use of, while we, in the meantime, are deprived of it.

(3) To a customer who feels that he is entitled to special privileges:

You may therefore rest assured that you are being accorded the same consideration as any of our customers. We have only one policy, which is to treat all with equal fairness, so that we cannot consistently exempt you from paying us interest on past-due accounts while we are requiring it of others.

(4) To a debtor who has not sent in an order since the account became past due. It was discovered that he was placing his orders elsewhere.

In all fairness, we want to ask whether you think it is right that the reward for carrying your account during the past thirty days should be the loss of your business for that length of time. If we had insisted on payment, would we not still be able to look upon you as an active customer?

(5) To a customer who has requested a special "dating" of cash discounts.

Gentlemen:

The same request in your October 4 letter, that cash discount be allowed when payment is made between the tenth and the fifteenth of the month following shipment, has been made from time to time by various customers, some of whom buy in very large quantities, but we have invariably felt that we were unable to grant it. This for two reasons:

First, cash discount is a premium offered for prepayment of an invoice, and if it is not paid within ten days the extra profit has not been earned. If we have to wait an average of thirty days, our bills are due net and we are obliged to disallow the discount privilege.

Second, it is obviously unfair to our many customers who pay in ten days, to permit others to remit in thirty days, as it would be giving the latter a better price than those who pay more promptly. We do not think you would expect us to discriminate in this way.

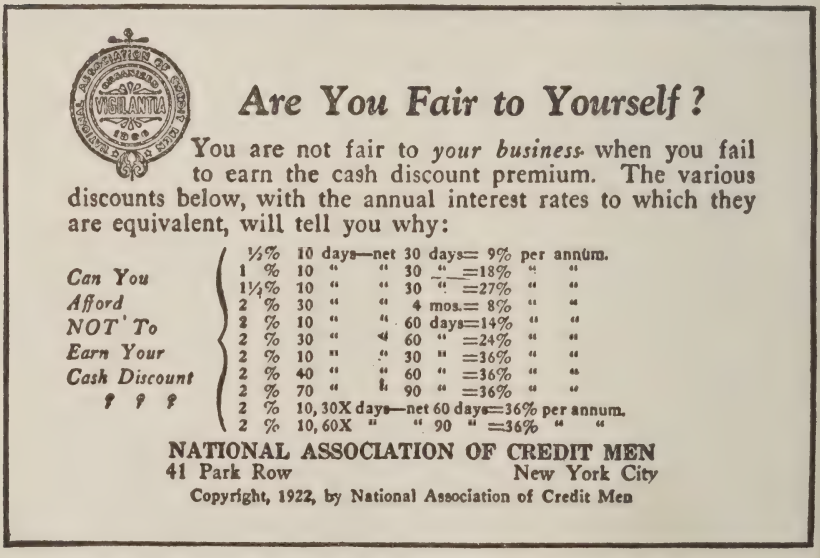
We want you to know, however, that we fully appreciate your point of view, as we ourselves, with about twenty factories, find it a difficult task to put our discount bills through for payment in ten days. Nevertheless, we do manage it somehow.

We feel confident that after considering the foregoing you will agree that our attitude is the only just one to assume, when all the circumstances are taken into account.

We shall hope to receive a share of your business as in the past and wish to tell you at this time that we are indeed grateful for your patronage.

Very truly yours,

Special appeals.—Almost every collection man has at some time resorted to special devices, stunt letters, or humorous appeals. These should be sparingly used, especially humorous letters. If they are employed, they should be original. They can be successful but once. If the cheerful appeal again becomes necessary with the same customer, a new device or stunt must be invented.


VIGILANTIA
1906
Are You Fair to Yourself?
You are not fair to your business when you fail to earn the cash discount premium. The various discounts below, with the annual interest rates to which they are equivalent, will tell you why:
Can You Afford NOT To Earn Your Cash Discount ? ? ?
½% 10 days—net 30 days= 9% per annum.
1 % 10 " " 30 " =18% " "
1¼% 10 " " 30 " =27% " "
2 % 30 " " 4 mos.= 8% " "
2 % 10 " " 60 days=14% " "
2 % 30 " " 60 " =24% " "
2 % 10 " " 30 " =36% " "
2 % 40 " " 60 " =36% " "
2 % 70 " " 90 " =36% " "
2 % 10, 30X days—net 60 days=36% per annum.
2 % 10, 60X " " 90 " =36% " "
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CREDIT MEN
41 Park Row New York City
Copyright, 1922, by National Association of Credit Men

1. Collection devices.—The card reproduced on this page exemplifies a dignified collection device. Another from the same source appears on page 349.

An electrical contractor in a small New Jersey suburb secured an almost perfect score on small past-due accounts by typing on his January statements, "Please give the New Year the right start, as we are trying to do, by cleaning up last year's accounts."

The Syracuse (N. Y.) Lighting Company has successfully used verse in following up consumers who leave the city without paying their final bill. The following rhyme was typed on the statement:

We haven't heard
A single word
From you about our letter.
A note dispatched
With check attached
Will make us feel much better.

In several cases, cheerful responses in verse were received with payment in full.

2. Stunt letters.—A callous debtor may be jolted out of his state of indifference by a cheerful appeal like that in the following stunt letter:

My dear Mr. Debtor:

Here's a pin. Looks a good deal like any other pin, doesn't it?

But this isn't an ordinary or garden variety of pin. It is a really and truly magic pin.

It will relieve you of a lot of bother and us of a lot of worry. It will set you square with us, and help us square up with the other fellow. So be careful and don't lose it.

Better be sure of it and play safe, for it is the pin you will want to use to attach your check to this letter in payment of the statement inclosed.

Thank you for the check. No charge for the smile we hope to get out of this little letter.

Yours expectantly,

P. S. Please hurry. We want to use this magic pin on another fellow.

The following letters are taken from the April, 1924, *Thus and So,* compiled by Frederick B. Stevens, Detroit, Michigan. Such letters are certain of a reading. Cheerfulness and compactness are the outstanding qualities.

(1)

Gentlemen:

You know these days of prosperity require extra energy—all around. Money at rest is static energy; in motion, ecstatic. Let me have your check for $210.60 to cover my shipments of July 5 and I shall put it into motion—ecstatic energy.

That is one of the active principles of business. Let me duplicate your last order while the opportunity is good, and I shall put motion into that and relieve you of vexatious delays.

These are motion times.

Expectantly yours,

(2)

Gentlemen:

You remember the ancient bard said, "The apparel oft proclaims the man." That signifies that appearances go a good way when you wish to establish an opinion.

I want to establish a good opinion in the minds of the auditors who will check over things next week.

I am not so eager to show we are good collectors, as that we sell to high class buyers.

Will you aid in that accomplishment by remitting for the overdue items of November and December, amounting to $465.70?

If you will remit by return mail, you will help.

Hopefully yours,

Current cartoon characters may be effectively employed, as the following letter proves:

Dear Mr. Debtor:

The following conversation held by our old friends Mutt and Jeff has been duly reported to us:

"For the love of Mike!" exclaimed Jeff, looking at a letter.

"Bad news in the letter, Jeff?" asked Mutt.

"I'll say so. Terrible news. A fellow writes me that he wants my autograph."

"I call a request for an autograph a compliment," said Mutt.

"Yes," wailed Jeff, "but he wants my autograph on a check for the seven bucks I owe him."

May we not, like Jeff's creditor, request you to autograph a check for $4.00, covering the indicated account? Thank you.

Cordially yours,

The foregoing letters are successful because the stunt enabled the collection man to get away from the stereotyped appeals. There is a moral here for collection correspondents. The conventional letter has lost its compelling force because of its well-worn phrasing. Debtors are accustomed to conventional letters. If originality and individuality are revealed in the standard collection letter, the customer will read and respond as he does to the occasional stunt letter. It is, therefore, dangerous to use "model" letters which have been found successful by others. The best advice is, "Compose your own." The letter which is successful in collecting accounts from hardware dealers may not be suited to the needs of the customers of a jobber in men's furnishings. The tone of the Mutt and Jeff letter would be offensive to the man who could be reached by the second *Thus and So* letter. The principles of the class appeal apply to collection letters.

Collection letters to women.—Collection letters to women are invariably more dignified in tone and language than letters to dealers. The colloquial, breezy style, often effective in "coddling" the dealer into payment of just debts, is altogether out of place. Sentences should be constructed correctly, and the language is literary and formally correct. Even words like "dealing" should not be used in letters to women.

Bad: Because you have dealt with us (*Better:* favored us with your purchases) during the past three years, we conclude (*Better:* naturally assume) that you have always received courteous service (*Better:* attention).

Apologetic statements are out of place.

Bad: I take the liberty of calling your attention to . . .

Better: Your attention is respectfully called to . . .

Bad: Permit me to suggest that you write your check now, while this letter is before you.

Better: Won't you please send us a check now, while . . .

Collection letters to women customers are usually typed on a smaller sheet than the standard eight by eleven sheet. Because customers of retail stores are not familiar with technical terms, these must be avoided.

The following three letters were used by a large department store with women customers who had not responded to statements. They are, of course, form letters typed so as to have the appearance of individual communications. Observe that the letters are not personal, that the language is reserved and courteous, correct and dignified, and that the tone grows more insistent from letter to letter. The third letter usually obtained payment.

(*September 8*)

Dear Madam:

We wish to call your attention to the balance still due on your account, and to request the favor of a check in settlement at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

$47.60

(*September 20*)

Dear Madam:

Receiving no response to our communication of September 8, regarding your account, we assume that it has been overlooked. The account represents purchases made during March, amounting to $47.60.

We hope it is now convenient for you to favor us with a check in settlement.

Very truly yours,

(*October 6*)

Dear Madam:

We have written you several times regarding your account now long past due, without result. We feel that we have not been too insistent in our request for payment, but in view of the time already granted, it would be unreasonable to expect any further extension, and we would appreciate an early settlement.

We hope to hear from you by return mail.

Very truly yours,

Problems of Oral and Written Solution.

I. Collection Letters for Oral Analysis.

1. This letter was mailed to seventy-six debtors, thirty-two paying in full:

Dear Sir:

A lot of questions get one all excited and confused.

Therefore I am going to ask just one:
Won't you please send in a check for your balance of —— on your ——account, which is —— months in arrears?

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours truly,

2.

Dear Sir:

What is a guarantor?

The dictionary says it is a person who will stand good for anything which he has vouched for and signed his name to.

I have here an account which your son ordered from us and which you guaranteed would be paid, should your son not pay his bill.

This account shows that he is three months behind in his payment, with a total balance of $18.00 unpaid.

Therefore it is necessary that you take this matter up with your son. We would appreciate it if you would see to it that some action is taken by him or you in cancelling this debt.

We thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Yours truly,

3. From a local cleaning and dyeing establishment.

Dear Sir:

We realize that you are a very busy man and that a small personal bill is sometimes annoying.

We know your account is good as gold, but please send us a check by early mail for the small amount of $9.15 still on our books against you.

Very truly yours,

4.

Dear Sir:

If this letter were written to acknowledge your account in full, it would make me as happy as it would you. In fact, Mr. Forsythe, I'm positive you would be the happier.

But no, you simply make up your mind that you want to receive these collection letters, that you enjoy having a draft drawn at the bank, and above all, it seems that you revel in the idea that you aren't playing square, although it seems hardly possible that you can get actual enjoyment out of being dunned.

You can, however, get a lot of fun out of doing the right thing. Therefore, why not do what is right and live up to your contract?

So won't you remit to me now the balance of your account? Or if you can't spare that much, send me part of it, as every little bit puts you a step nearer to living up to your contract.

I know you will.

Sincerely yours,

$89.60.

5.

Dear Sir:

What is the matter?

Have we done anything to hurt your feelings? I don't think so. You will agree we have not.

As it appears to me, we have been giving you a square deal. Why don't you do the same for us? I'm sure we deserve it.

Please remit now the balance, or a part of it. The total against you is $129.80.

Sincerely yours,

6.

Dear Sir:

On April 17 you purchased from us three dozen silver pencils amounting to thirty-six dollars. We hoped you would take advantage of our terms, 2/10/n/30, but as we did not hear from you within that time we wrote you on June 1 and June 15 about payment.

Your bill is now two months overdue. We cannot fill your future orders until this obligation has been met.

If payment is being withheld because the goods were not satisfactory, please write us and we will try to make an adjustment.

Yours truly,

7.

Dear Sir:

Ten weeks is a long time to wait for $5.10, isn't it?

We know your credit is good, but should be pleased to receive a check from you so that we can remove this item from our books.

Yours truly,

8.

Dear Sir:

We are writing once more to call your attention to your account of January, now six weeks overdue, and amounting to $15.80.

We have some large bills to meet at this time and would appreciate your remittance.

Truly yours,

9. This letter is used by a collection agency.

Dear Sir:

I have your letter telling me when you will pay your account.

I greatly appreciate your honorable conduct in this matter. The tone of your letter convinces me that you are honest and that you take an interest and pride in paying your just debts. I know you will send me the money at the time you have fixed.

I am absolutely relying upon your word and honesty in this matter and I assure you that no unpleasant action will be taken if you keep your promise.

Thank you for your courteous letter. I am awaiting the promised payment. Use the inclosed envelope in remitting.

Yours truly,

10.

Dear Sir:

It is our custom to check over our records on the first of each month, and to notify our patrons of any outstanding items in their accounts. In the press of larger affairs, people overlook unobtrusive details, to which, nevertheless, they really desire to give due attention.

We find that the monthly posting of our customers on the condition of their accounts is a policy they appreciate and to which they respond in the spirit in which it is practiced. We all realize that regularity in these things oils the wheels of that indispensable commercial vehicle—credit.

Accordingly, we are inclosing a statement of your account for March and February for your prompt attention.

Very truly yours,

11. "The following three letters brought in 564 payments of varying amounts from 626 concerns. . . . Considering that every effort had been previously made to collect this money, this series of three plain, everyday letters brought results that would be considered eminently satisfactory by any company in like circumstances."—E. P. Corbett in *Printers' Ink,* January 4, 1923.

(*a*) This letter was sent to 626 customers who had been repeatedly dunned. Of these 262 made payment, in varying amounts, from 137 for only one month, to 49 who paid in full.

Dear Mr. Forse:

Yesterday our treasurer called me into his office and said:

"Mr. Brown, I see that John Forse, of Blankville, Ala., has not yet settled his account. In fact, he hasn't made a payment since November, 1920, though I've written him several times. I did not wish to bring suit, for they've had pretty hard times in that section the past two years. Now, however, conditions are better there. I'd like you to write Mr. Forse and ask him to clear up this account. We've been fair with him and I think you will find that he will want to be equally fair with us."

I thought I could do no better than to tell you just what our treasurer said to me. We *have* waited a long time, you know. So I am just going to ask you to write and let me know just what you can do for us.

Yours truly,

(*b*) The second letter went to 460 customers, in some cases with minor changes to some who had sent only a small remittance in response to the first letter. There were 165 remittances, from 100 making one payment, to 27 paying in full. "There were also 17 replies from others who explained that they could not then pay, but would do so a little later."

Dear Mr. Burley:

I know it's the usual thing, when no answer is received from a "collection" letter, to pretend to believe the matter was overlooked by the other man.

But I'm going to be frank enough to admit that I believe the reason you didn't answer my last letter with a remittance was that you perhaps didn't have the money right then. Am I right?

You see, I'm taking for granted that you feel just as we would feel if conditions were reversed. So I'm just appealing to your sense of fairness. Don't you think it would be only fair to let us have what is due us, after we've waited so long a time?

Think it over, Mr. Burley, and if you cannot possibly send us a check today, let me know when we may look for one. This little courtesy won't take much of your time and we certainly shall appreciate it. With continued good wishes we remain,

Sincerely yours,

Assistant Treasurer.

(*c*) The third letter was sent to 363 customers: to those who had not responded to the preceding letters, to some who had responded without sending money, and to some who had sent insufficient money. The letter brought 165 remittances, from 76 making one payment, to 37 paying in full.

Dear Mr. Banks:

If a customer owed you $285, and for two years had paid nothing on it, how would you feel?

But now suppose you had known that customer had been up against hard conditions all that time, so you had put yourself in his place and had decided not to appeal to the law to collect your money.

Then, when things picked up with the customer, suppose you wrote to him as man to man, asking him to treat you as fairly as you had treated him. Wouldn't you feel certain that, as a business man and as a gentleman, he would respond? Wouldn't you?

There are laws that regulate business, Mr. Banks. But the biggest thing that keeps business clean and aboveboard is the fact that most men believe in the square deal. Business would go to smash if we couldn't depend upon the sacredness of a commercial agreement.

That is all we ask from you, Mr. Banks—a square deal. You believe in that just as we do, don't you? Then let's settle this thing as between

friends and gentlemen. A check from you by return mail would confirm our belief that you do believe in the square deal.

Earnestly yours,

Assistant Treasurer.

12. A letter like this is objectionable. It may subject the creditor to legal difficulties. Why?

Dear Sir:

You surely do not recognize the position in which you place yourself by your continued neglect to pay the sum of $27.00 owing us. You are surely aware that the grocers, dry goods dealers, and other merchants are fully organized and that the debtor who does not pay his just debts is blacklisted by merchants, doctors, and other professional people—the very ones on whom you may have to depend at critical times. You surely do not care to destroy your reputation for honesty. Then take care of this matter at once, for if it is not settled by the end of next week our lawyers will act.

Insistently yours,

II. Collection Letters for Criticism and Revision.

1.

Dear Sir:

You have forgotten to send us your check for this month's payment.

To be sure, this is a small matter, but in a business like ours, these small matters make up the entire business, and promptness in remitting is greatly appreciated.

Please do not write a letter. Just pin your check to this letter and mail it in the inclosed addressed envelope.

Very truly yours,

2. To an old credit customer in excellent standing, who burned out.

(*a*)

Dear Mr. Orville:

We are sorry to hear of the hard luck that came your way on April 27.

The sixty-day extension of time is gladly given. If we can be of assistance in any other way, please let us know.

Forget your bill for the present, and remember it on July 1.

Here's to the new store and good luck!

Very sincerely yours,

(*b*)

Dear Mr. Orville:

The sixty-day extension we were glad to grant you has passed quickly, hasn't it? It seems as if it were just yesterday that we last wrote you. There was no check in today's mail, and this has caused me to believe that you are waiting until the arrival of your insurance money on July 7.

Your check will be acceptable before July 7, but if you are waiting for the insurance money, please mail the $85.89 by July 8 at the latest. Your credit is good here. Let us have some of your good orders as in the past.

Very sincerely yours,

3. Two formal reminders and one personal letter preceded these letters.

(*a*)

Dear Madam:

It is just nine weeks since we first sent you a statement of your account to the amount of $29.00.

Your credit at our store is still good. We believe in your honesty. We know that you intend to pay this just debt.

Please send us a check by Saturday of this week.

Yours truly,

(*b*)

Dear Madam:

Why was there no check from you in the morning's mail?

You have not paid your bill and you have not written to explain your failure to do this.

Your patronage is desired by this firm. We are pleased to carry your account.

The account, however, is long overdue, and you will agree that we have a legal right to immediate payment.

Our regular procedure is to give all accounts, ten weeks past due, to our legal department.

Yours truly,

4. First personal letter.

Dear Sir:

A great deal of ingenuity is wasted in trying to extract money painlessly by correspondence. Sometimes a letter is written under misapprehension of the facts as the customer sees them. Often a reference is made to the credit department, or an executive signs the letter. Like the "Busy" sign, such tokens are irritating.

All of which is preliminary to stating that there is past due on your account $71.85. If your records agree with ours, please send on a check, at once. If not, please thrash the matter out promptly with the writer.

Yours truly,

5. Second personal letter.

Dear Sir:

With thousands of small charge accounts, like yours for $19.45, you can readily see where our profits would go if we were compelled to go through the lamentations of Job and Jeremiah to collect each one.

Please remit.

Yours truly,

6. Third personal letter.

Dear Sir:

We are at a loss to know why we do not hear from you in regard to your account, which is now ten weeks past due and about which you have had numerous reminders and two letters.

We are reluctant to take legal steps but feel we are entitled to an explanation or settlement without further delay.

We expect to hear from you immediately.

Yours truly,

7. Simplify this letter. It sounds like a student letter, but it is not.

Dear Sir:

Now that we have permitted day after day to elapse following our last letter, you will, beyond peradventure of a doubt, be anxious and in fact happy immediately to provide for your account to the extent of $91.66, which is the total of all the items appearing on our last statement with the exception of the three November invoices.

With entire confidence that your most courteous treatment will be accorded the situation, we take the liberty of thanking you at this particular time.

Yours very truly,

8.

Dear Mrs. Burle:

About ten days ago we sent you a statement of your account amounting to $10.60.

We believe this has escaped your attention and that you will be pleased to receive this reminder.

Thanking you for your patronage, which is much appreciated, we are

Yours very truly,

9. Improve the construction of this letter. It also violates correctness.

Dear Madam:

Being one of our old customers, I permitted your purchases on credit during December, in spite of the amounts against you from your delinquent October account. Now you are behind in payments on purchases for October, November, and December.

Kindly favor us with a prompt remittance, at least for the October purchases, not later than the 10th inst., in order not to be embarrassed by refusal of further credit.

You have compelled us to write again concerning your account.

You must admit it is more than a little overdue.

Yours truly,

10. To a local radio dealer enjoying exclusive sales rights.

Dear Sir:

We do not for a fraction of a minute entertain the thought that you do not allow yourself to value properly the exclusive agency privileges we have been glad in the past to extend you in your territory.

As a matter of cold fact we are inclined to be positive that you appreciate the tidy profits you have realized since the initiation of dealings with the choice clientele that purchases our products at your establishment.

Yet you constrain us to mention the disagreeable fact that we shall be compelled by your seemingly utter disregard for previous statements

and letters to withdraw our esteemed agency privileges unless you desire some means of procuring cash to settle your delinquent account with us. Hoping that you will perceive this in the spirit intended, and will remit without further procrastination, and awaiting your early reply, we are with confidence in your integrity,

Very truly yours,

11.

Dear Madam:

What can be the matter?

"Oh where, oh where has our customer gone?" Do you not like our goods? Are our prices too high?

You have not used your charge account during February, and there is that past-due account from last autumn, dragging along unpaid.

Perhaps that's why you haven't been in.

Why not clean up the old scores of yesteryear? Clear your conscience by remitting at once the amount due us and we'll feel better all round.

Your remittance for $94.36 will make me smile.

Respectively yours,

12.

Dear Madam:

Have we failed in any way? Has our work been poor? Or have we made a mistake in itemizing your statement?

If we are at fault, we wish that you would kindly write or tell us what is wrong. We try to live up to our policy of perfect work and absolute fairness.

If our work has continued to meet your approval, and if the inclosed unpaid statement is correct, please send us a check. If it is not convenient to pay in full, mail whatever amount you wish.

The inclosed envelope is for your convenience.

Yours truly,

III. Problems in Writing Collection Letters.

1. Assume that you have been asked by the manager of the Central Radio Shop, Merchant City, Pennsylvania, to prepare a collection sequence suitable for charge customers whose accounts have become past due. No accounts are for more than $75.

Your sequence includes one itemized bill, one "statement rendered," two formal reminders, three personal letters.

Write the formal reminders and the personal letters.

2. Assume that Mrs. R. A. Deedsley, of 368 Parke Avenue, Your City, whose husband is highly rated by the mercantile agencies, owes you (February 27) $94.80 for miscellaneous items purchased at your Automobile Accessories Shop during September and October, the last purchase having been made on October 21. Three formal notifications like those on page 358 have failed to elicit a response. Write the first personal letter. Try to secure payment, but do not offend. Attach to your letter a brief explanatory note indicating why you chose the appeal you have used in this letter.

3. On December 15, Orville Horton, Noname, Minnesota, dealer in hardware, purchased a line of boys' sleds from Janes and Company, St. Paul, for $57.85. He received the customary statement on January 15. On February 1 and 15 you sent formal reminders. It is now March 1, but he has not paid for the sleds. Write a personal letter appealing to his sense of fairness. (He had the sleds in time for the Christmas trade, which was good this year. There has been much snow, so that there must have been a satisfactory demand for sleds.)

4. It is now March 15. Orville Horton, whose case is presented in the preceding problem, has not responded to your personal letter of March 1. Write a personal letter appealing to his credit standing and self-interest.

5. As collection manager of the Interstate Harvester Company, Ploria, Illinois, you are interested in Hess Brothers, dealers in farm implements in Business Center, South Dakota, who are behind in their account with your company.

You have just received from Hess Brothers a statement of assets and liabilities as of December 31. Their assets are a little in excess of $82,000. Of this, close to $60,000 is merchandise. Liabilities total close to $60,000. This means $22,000 in bills and accounts receivable.

Give Hess Brothers business service. You know that collections have been slow in the farming districts. Now, however, is the time to push collections. Urge them to launch a campaign to collect 80 or 90 per cent of outstanding accounts.

You note that there has been a satisfactory volume of business between your company and Hess Brothers. Yet past-due accounts lose sales for your company and for Hess Brothers, as your policy has always been not to ship an order when the account is past due. To carry a complete stock, Hess Brothers should clean up their indebtedness. They cannot sell machinery if they haven't it on the floors to sell. Urge them to write you about local conditions and their plans. You want them to put your company in a position to ship them the machinery they need. You will coöperate in planning the campaign for collecting past-due accounts. Write the letter. (Do not take too much business sense and experience for granted. Explain your points clearly, but be careful not to offend.)

6. You have on your memorandum file for March 3 the name of Bert Messer, whose account has run since last September. You have sent him statements, reminders, and the usual letters appealing for payment. He has not responded and still owes you $40.00. As a last resort, try cheerfulness. Startle him into attention by means of a stunt letter containing, if possible, a humorous appeal that will induce him to remit. You know that he has suffered no misfortune either at home or in his business. He is simply careless and negligent.

7. The local cleaner and dyer has asked you to prepare a series of collection letters to customers whose accounts are past due. All the accounts are small, none being for more than $30.00. The system is to be used with men and women customers. (1) Draw up a plan, indicating the number of units, the mailing dates, the kind of appeal used in each letter. Show how the series rises to a climax. (2) Write the first formal reminder, and the first and last personal letters.

Chapter XII

ADJUSTMENT LETTERS

The adjustment letter sells satisfaction. It is not easy to write. Because the strategy in adjustment letters is difficult, the writer needs the accumulated power gained from practice in writing the types of letters discussed in preceding chapters. The problem is to satisfy the buyer but at the same time to protect the seller.

The importance of adjustment letters.—Because they strengthen good will, carefully planned and cheerfully phrased adjustment letters are a valuable asset in any business. They bind customers to the firm by awakening a sense of loyalty through impressing upon them that the spirit of service and fair treatment is characteristic of the firm's dealings.

Experience teaches that the human factor in business often gives rise to just claims based on faulty products or service. The most rigid inspection does not invariably eliminate faulty products. The most efficiently supervised service occasionally breaks down. Business men, therefore, expect to receive complaints and claims. It is profitable to give serious consideration to these and to deal frankly with them, for it is less expensive to hold an old customer than to secure a new one.

Making the claim.—Whatever the cause, the claim or complaint should be made calmly, courteously, and as a matter of fact. If there is good cause for the claim, the facts should be stated positively but tactfully. The purpose is to secure a prompt settlement. A display of temper, and the use of vituperative or sarcastic language, make the adjustment more difficult, and certainly delay it. Lengthy explanations are unnecessary and confusing unless the difficulties of the situation make elaboration unavoidable. In the vast majority of cases, a brief but clear statement of the essential facts best serves the interests of the claimant. The following plan is practical:

1. State the claim, giving the essential facts necessary for identifying the faulty product or service. (Date of order, of shipment, of arrival (or non-arrival), error, kind and amount of damage, and so forth.)

2. Ask courteously but firmly for a prompt rectification. If you are seriously inconvenienced (personally or in your business), stress the unfortunate results (loss of sales, embarrassment in home or in your relations with others, as in the case of gifts). If you are a regular customer, you may strengthen your claim by suggesting withdrawal of your trade if service does not improve.

The letter given below makes the claim in the *wrong way*.

Dear Sirs:

You certainly made a fine job of that shipment of perfume and face powder.

I smelled it before the driver unloaded it off his truck. What didn't leak out of the box squooched into the face powder cartons and you'll see what a nice batter it makes.

My order was long enough coming anyway, and now that ivory-top shipping clerk of yours sent me an omelette. What do you think I run here anyway, a restaurant? But you will have to eat it. I sent it back right away this afternoon, collect.

If you can get someone who knows how to pack goods and get me my order by Friday, I'll take it. Otherwise I order from a local jobber. I must have the goods for my Saturday trade. Do you get that?

Respectfully,

The effective way (which does not get a laugh, but which does get results):

Gentlemen:

I regret to inform you that the shipment of perfume and face powder, ordered by me on March 3 and shipped by you on March 9, arrived this morning in damaged condition.

Upon opening the box, which showed no signs of damage from the outside, I found that eight bottles were broken, and that the contents had damaged the face powder so I cannot sell it.

I am holding the shipment for your instructions.

As I must have these goods, without fail, for my Saturday trade, please give my order your immediate attention.

Very truly yours,

Qualities of the adjustment letter.—All that has been learned in previous chapters concerning the selling point of view, and the necessity of adapting the message to the reader, applies also to adjustment letters. *Consideration* and *cheerfulness* are especially important because the buyer has a grievance the seller must remove. Consideration without cheerfulness leaves the reader cold. The adjustment is appreciated if it is made with a smile and in the spirit of good nature. The adjustment manager of a large New York department store wrote the following sentences for this chapter:

"In writing our letters, we insist that courtesy and the spirit of kindness be the only impression left with the customer. We are generally able to approach the adjustment in a manner which leaves no doubt in the customer's mind that we are anxious to please him, even though, in some instances, we cannot fully comply with the particular request under discussion."

The claim letter should be answered promptly. If the adjustment cannot be made immediately, a letter of acknowledgment should be dispatched, reassuring the customer by telling him that the claim is being investigated and that he will be informed as soon as the adjustment has been completed.

The tone should be calm, courteous, and persuasive. The customer is made to feel that the seller has thoroughly considered his claim, is giving him all possible assistance, and is proceeding in a spirit of fair dealing. The tone is spoiled by negative suggestion, offensive phrases (whether intentional or not), and by restatement of the claim.

As the purpose of the adjustment letter is to remove a difficulty or grievance, the claim should not be restated. Restatement stresses the unfavorable elements in the situation and by so doing increases the difficulty of persuading the reader to accept the adjustment offered. Instead of reawaking the original grievance, subdue it, even if you cannot obliterate it, by offering constructive suggestions. The successful letter substitutes a positive solution for the negative elements of the claim.

The following sentences represent the opening and closing statements in a letter intended to reconcile the buyer to

the price asked by the seller. Observe how the two strategic points—the opening and the close—give prominence to the negative elements, thus defeating the object of the letter, which is to remove the grievance.

Negative: We have your letter of the 20th in which you state that you do not like our prices on the shipment of andirons. These andirons are not priced too high. . . .
We feel that it is impossible for us to quote you a lower price. If you cannot sell the andirons, we shall gladly refund your money, or give you another selection at a lower price—whichever seems more desirable to you.

Such a close strongly suggests the desirability of returning the andirons, whereas in the body of the letter an attempt is made to persuade the buyer to retain the shipment. The corethought of the letter is negatively presented in the subordinate "if" clause introducing the last sentence of the letter. Furthermore, why not subordinate the undesirable alternatives —if they must be mentioned at all—and stress the suggested action?

A positive and cheerful—confidence-inspiring—close might read as follows:

Thus you are receiving andirons of the latest and most popular design at a cost that is really very slightly higher than that quoted by our competitors on the style no longer in active demand. Although we shall, of course, be glad to ship you what we have left of the old design, we assure you that your customers will prefer the style you have, and that your quick sales will net you a tidy profit in a short time.

Offensive words and phrases.—The tone of the following sentences is negative and offensive:

(*a*) Your letter of the 28th *in which you assert* that our prices are too high has been received.
(*b*) I do not see how the overcharge of two dollars you mention in your letter of the 10th is possible. We have an efficient organization, and our bills are always checked. The charge on your bill is probably correct. You must be mistaken. However, I will call attention to your complaint as soon as I get back to the office.

Such phrasings appear too frequently in adjustment letters. As a matter of fact, the writer of the foregoing antagonistic sentences probably did not set out to offend his customer, who had written to him instead of the home office, in the hope of

receiving sympathetic consideration. The young writer should be on his guard against certain phrases which are always offensive in the delicate situation created by a claim. The following phrases, because they antagonize the claimant or cast suspicion upon his motives, must be avoided.

1. "assert, you state, you say, cannot understand, at a loss, you claim:" "The shoes, which you assert (*or*: which you state, which you say) were damaged in transit." "We cannot understand (*or*: are at a loss to understand) why your inspectors rejected this shipment." "Your letter, in which you claim that. . ."

2. "Complaint" always has the unpleasant suggestion of whining. No man likes to be told that he is a "complainer." "Had we used the same grade shown in the sample, you would have been justified in your complaint." Never use the word when you are writing to a complainant or claimant.

3. "If" clauses, especially at the close of the letter, are weak and, moreover, arouse doubt as to the seller's complete faith in the accuracy and fairness of his adjustment, as in "If this is not satisfactory, let me know." "Hope" is equally weak, as in: "We hope this will be satisfactory." The close should sell the adjustment, as in: "Because we value your orders and consider you a good customer, we are glad to make this adjustment."

4. "Never happen again" is weak. Exaggerated statements are not reassuring. Besides, mistakes do occur in business. "We wish to assure you that this will never happen again," is not persuasive. Write instead, "In our files we have made a memorandum of your wishes in this matter, and assure you that your order will hereafter be filled exactly as you wish." "Thank you for calling our attention to this mistake. We have taken the necessary precautions to avoid such mistakes in the future."

5. "Our records" has been used insincerely so often that the customer suspects the genuineness of the whole letter. Avoid the phrase except when detailed excerpts from your files are necessary to make your adjustment clear.

Vague: Our records show that we are not at fault.
Approved: The following dates, taken from our records of your order and its shipment, indicate that we proceeded as follows.

The plan of an adjustment letter.—The following headings are indispensable in any good adjustment letter:

1. Get in step with the claimant (*a*) by thanking him for bringing the claim to your attention or (*b*) by regretting that he is inconvenienced. A constructive opening takes the point of view of the claimant by stressing those points in which the seller and buyer are in agreement. Such an opening is sympathetic. It disarms the reader by putting him into a receptive mood.

2. Explain the facts surrounding the claim. Do not restate the claim in full. Show that you have taken pains to find the cause of the claim.

3. State cheerfully the action you are taking.

4. Close by expressing appreciation and a desire to cooperate. Such a close convinces the claimant that you are acting in a spirit of fairness and genuine service.

Note.—The position of the second and third headings is sometimes reversed, according to the kind of adjustment.

The following letter incorporates the foregoing headings:

Dear Madam:

We regret that you were troubled to write your letter of December 2 regarding the proofs of your son's portrait.

After careful examination of the six proofs, I am convinced that they are not worthy of so good a subject as your young son.

That these proofs, madam, do not measure up to your expectations of our service is explained by the illness of M. Martelle at the time of your sittings. When you made the appointment, he was not ill, but after an absence of three weeks he is now with us. M. Martelle specializes in children's portraits.

During M. Martelle's enforced absence, a colleague did his best with children, but I assure you that we can now make a better portrait of your son.

Under the circumstances we are glad to suspend our regulation of one set of proofs for each patron. We invite you to visit our studios again.

By favoring us on or before Saturday, December 10, you will positively have an artistic portrait before Christmas.

Very sincerely yours,

Types of adjustment letters.—Adjustments vary according to who is at fault and according to whether the claim is granted or refused. The following types are representative of most common situations faced in the adjustment department:

(1) The seller is at fault. The claim is granted. (2) The carrier is to blame. A favorable adjustment is made. (3) The buyer is at fault, but the claim is granted. (4) The buyer is at fault. The claim is refused. (5) The customer has ceased purchasing. A claim or complaint is solicited.

1. *The seller is to blame.*—A prompt, complete adjustment is always advisable when the seller has inconvenienced the customer. Apologies are out of place, but a frank acknowledgment of error should be made, together with an assurance that precautions have been taken to eliminate similar errors in the future. It is fatal to defend yourself, and unwise to enter upon a lengthy explanation of why you fell short of perfect service. A short, cheerful letter is approved by the age-old proverb, "Least said, soonest mended." A department-store expert adjuster writes: "The policy of this company is a very liberal one. The customer is given the benefit of a doubt. This method reduces our adjustment letters, comparatively, to explanatory notes, and acquires many friends through the advertising value this policy affords."

The letter reproduced below illustrates a good adjustment.

Gentlemen:

Thank you for writing us on November 10 concerning the platinum setting you ordered on October 29.

By immediately checking back your order, we found that a mistake had been made in transcribing your order in our order department.

We are very sorry that you and your customer are inconvenienced, but we are at the same time grateful to you for helping us place the blame and prevent similar mistakes in the future.

Although we have never, in the case of expensive settings like yours, promised delivery in less than two weeks, I am personally taking care of your order and am having it handled so that you will receive the setting not later than Saturday morning.

Please be assured of our desire to co-operate with you as in the past.

Very sincerely yours,

2. *The carrier is to blame.*—When a third person (usually the carrier) is at fault, the claim is granted for reasons of delay or damage in transit. If investigation discloses that the carrier is responsible for delay or damage, the letter should state explicitly what action the customer must take to hasten delivery or protect the seller (in case of damage). Although the seller may not be legally responsible for goods delivered safely into the hands of the carrier, progressive houses retain good will by making an immediate adjustment and then seeking redress from the carrier, with or without the aid of the customer, as the situation demands.

When conditions permit the shipper to make a just claim against the carrier, a duplicate shipment should be sent immediately.

The following letter is good:

Dear Sir:

We are very sorry to know from your letter of March 14 that the mahogany desk you ordered as a birthday gift for your son arrived so badly marred that you cannot accept it.

As the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad gave us a receipt acknowledging that the desk was received perfectly crated, it must have been damaged in transit. Although our responsibility ends when the railroad has accepted the desk, we know how much you are interested in this beautiful and useful gift for your son. We are, therefore, sending you today, by prepaid express, another desk, exactly like the one you ordered. It should reach you promptly.

If you will please telephone the express company to make a special delivery immediately upon the arrival of the desk at their receiving station, you should have the desk not later than the day of your son's birthday.

Please leave the damaged desk in the hands of the railroad. We shall enter a claim with them, so that you will not be troubled further.

We thank you for writing promptly, and assure you that our only desire is that you should receive the desk promptly and in perfect condition.

Sincerely yours,

Where goods have not been severely damaged in transit, and where it is more profitable for the seller to have the customer retain them, a discount can be offered as an inducement. Such an adjustment applies also where delay has con-

siderably lessened the value of the shipment to the customer.

When the damage is slight, it is often possible to induce the customer to retain the article. Where the finish, for example, has been scratched, the customer can obliterate the scratch if you send him a small container of polish, with simplified directions how to proceed.

3. (A) *The buyer is to blame: claim granted.*—When it is decided to grant a claim in spite of the fact that the investigation reveals that the customer is at fault, the writer should capitalize the opportunity to sell service to the customer.

The qualities of this type of adjustment letter make it difficult to write effectively. The tone must be firm, or the customer may think the firm "easy." The letter, furthermore, must not suggest that the claim is unjust. To do so would defeat the chief purpose, which is to impress the reader with the spirit of service. Although the letter cannot fail to make clear that an exception is being made, the customer's responsibility must be indicated in such a way as not to irritate him or humiliate him by making him feel that he is receiving something to which he is not entitled. In any case, elaboration is out of place where detailed explanation reflects on the reader's intelligence.

Claims revealing that the customer is at fault result from a variety of causes, chief among which are carelessness and ignorance of the proper use of the goods. Whatever the cause, the adjustment is made for the purpose of winning the customer as a loyal booster of the firm and of its spirit of service and fair dealing.

The following letter is good:

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your letter of August 16, which we have not answered pending the receipt of the stabilator from your service station at Englewood.

A careful examination of the stabilator shows that the spring did not break because of defective material or poor workmanship. We found that the adjusting nut had been turned three notches more than is necessary on a Franklin car. Each turn of the nut winds the stabilator spring tighter, and when the spring is too tight there is excessive strain during the recovery of your car springs after the car has passed a hole or obstruction in the road.

Although our guarantee covers only defects in material and workmanship, we desire at all times to co-operate with our patrons in providing them with perfect service from our stabilators. As you have driven your car less than three months, it gives us pleasure to forward your stabilator with a new spring.

We are today sending the stabilator to your service station. It will take the service man less than fifteen minutes to attach it.

May we ask you to read the inclosed booklet, "What You Should Know About Your Wetsen Stabilator," and to request your service man to look properly to the adjustment on the other three stabilators now on your car, so that you will not have the same annoying experience with them?

We assure you of our interest in your car comfort, and of our desire to assist you in enjoying to the full those easy-riding qualities that Wetsen Stabilators are giving thousands of good cars.

Sincerely yours,

3. (B) *The buyer is to blame: claim refused.*—When the investigation shows clearly that the claim is unfair and that no exception can justly be made, the letter should state the facts in a straightforward, frank way. The writer's sincerity impresses the customer with the company's desire to retain his good will. The appeal to the customer's sense of fairness should be substantiated by a tactful but business-like explanation of essential facts.

The object of the letter is to clear yourself of blame, not to put the blame on the customer. Use special care to avoid blaming or accusing the customer. Let the facts speak for themselves, so that, if he feels resentment, it will not be directed against you. Observe how the following letter incorporates the essentials of this type of adjustment.

Dear Sir:

We are glad to have your letter of January 5 concerning the number of local messages sent over your telephone, Leonia 8067, during the month of December, as indicated on your bill of January 1.

Local calls originating with your telephone are recorded by means of a message register, consisting of a mechanical device connected to your telephone line at the Central Office. Each local call is registered by this device upon completion of the message. A separate and distinct register is provided for each line, thus insuring subscribers against the possibility that calls placed over one line are charged against another.

Only completed calls are registered. Uncompleted calls, such as those on which "busy" or "don't answer" is reported, are not registered. In case a wrong connection is established, and the operator's attention is called to it, the wrong connection is not registered.

A careful recheck of our records has been made without disclosing any error in the number of messages billed to you. We have tested the message register used on your line and find it in proper working condition. We have also reviewed our reports of trouble for the period involved, but can find no record of trouble which could have affected in any way the registering of your calls.

In view of these facts, therefore, and also because of the accuracy of the registering device and the precautions observed in our operating practice, we believe that the charge in question is correct and that it represents only those messages which were actually sent from your telephone.

In this connection we should like very much to have you visit one of our Central Offices and secure first-hand knowledge of the complete handling of telephone calls. Upon request, any of our Business Offices will gladly arrange the details of such a visit.

Yours very truly,
Local Commercial Manager.

4. *Soliciting complaints.*—Progressive firms welcome constructive criticism in the form of just claims and justified complaints. These point the way to improvement in quality of goods and service. Alert executives profit by the complaints of customers. As a result, claims and complaints are solicited from all classes of customers, especially from customers who have ceased purchasing.

The letter inviting a claim must be brief, sincere, personal, and dignified. The tone is that of cheerful coöperation.

1. This letter, typed on social stationery, was signed by the vice president of the company.

Dear Madam:

In reviewing our accounts with customers, we note, with regret, that yours has been inactive for some little time, and write to inquire if there is anything we can do to have you use it again as before. We value our charge accounts highly, and try to make them a source of convenience and profit to our customers.

If, for any reason, therefore, we have failed to please you, we should be glad to be informed as to how we have fallen short, that we may try to make good our deficiency.

We feel that an active charge account with this store will prove of value through keeping the customer in touch with what is newest and best in merchandise and in service.

Will you kindly assist us in the keeping of our records by replying to the questions on the inclosed blank, and mailing it to us in the stamped envelope?

We thank you for your courtesy.

Respectfully yours,

(2) This letter was sent to a list of occasional charge customers by a large department store in New York:

My dear Mrs. Babthorne:

Our organization is greatly interested in serving you satisfactorily.

May we have the pleasure of hearing how we can best meet your requirements, thus enabling us to be of service to you more frequently?

For your convenience a stamped and addressed envelope and a correspondence card are inclosed.

Very truly yours,

Exercises.

I. Exercises for Oral and Written Revision.

1. Comment upon these opening and closing sentences from adjustment letters. In each case the writer is addressing a desirable customer.

(*a*) We have your letter of July 7, in which you state that the curling irons are defective.

(*b*) We thank you for your letter of July 25. We shall make every effort to give you satisfaction.

(*c*) After examining the boots you mention in your letter of November 15, we can understand how annoyed you must have been by their lack of durability.

(*d*) Thank you for writing us regarding the silk in the ten gowns, Model X31, which we sent you on May 10. We are always glad to hear from our customers with reference to any discrepancy in their orders, and the goods delivered by us.

(*e*) We assure you that this silk is of a superior quality. Your customers will be pleased with it. If at any time there is any doubt in

your mind regarding our merchandise, please let us know. We are always pleased to hear from you.

(*f*) Your letter of the 28th in which you assert that our prices are too high has been received.

(*g*) Now that we have carefully and courteously explained what you believed a wrong item in your account, please co-operate by sending us your check.

(*h*) This mistake was due to the heavy rush of Christmas business which somewhat upset our shipping department at that time.

(*i*) This is one of those mistakes that does occur once in a great while in spite of our rigid system of shipping supervision.

(*j*) We are sure that this is satisfactory.

(*k*) We are confident that you will accept our apology for the mistake and that you will reconsider your intention to return the goods.

(*l*) We have your letter of October 14 in which you claim that the second pair of shoes we sent you are also small.

(*m*) I have read your letter of September 9 and was surprised to hear of the claim you are making.

(*n*) We have your letter of March 10 in which you claim that we overcharged you on the last order.

(*o*) In regard to your complaint of the 8th inst. wish to say that we never have trouble with other firms to whom we ship the same leather.

(*p*) Your complaint of October 6 has been received.

(*q*) By the reports we have received it seems that the goods must have been packed in a leaky freight car, so we can not be held responsible, and advise you to get in touch with the railroad at once.

(*r*) Thank you for your letter of July 25, which gives the opportunity to explain the quality of binding used on the books.

(*s*) I do not see how such a thing is possible as you mention in yours of the 8th inst. Our bills are always checked. You surely haven't figured right.

2. Comment upon the following letters, pointing out where the letter fails and where it succeeds. Suggest improvements. Identify the type of adjustment each letter illustrates. Rewrite the letters indicated by your instructor.

(*a*)

Dear Madam:

We have carefully examined the shoes and justly agree that they haven't met your expectations in regard to durability.

Our salesman should have told you that this shoe is more practicable for indoor purposes, where it does not receive as hard wear as on a tennis court.

We are sending you a shoe made of durable canvas and light in weight. Many professionals, as well as amateurs, use this shoe in preference to any other.

We have already credited you with $1.75, leaving a balance of $1.50.

We are certain that this shoe will meet your requirements.

Yours truly,

(*b*)

Dear Sir:

Sorry to hear you received walnut beds in poor condition.

We have obtained from our local railroad agent a duplicate receipt showing that he received this shipment in perfect condition.

You may be assured that we will do all we can to help you secure a just claim against the railroad. We are, however, unable to file a claim at our end.

We have shipped by express another order of these popular numbers, which are enjoying their greatest seasonal demand just now, so that you may not lose any sales.

We suggest that you file a claim at once with the railroad.

We assure you that we shall do all in our power to protect your profits.

Yours truly,

(*c*)

Dear Mr. Heck:

In reply to yours of the 11th we would suggest that you keep the shoes and sell them to your customers in the confidence that they are superior to the sample Mr. Bern showed you.

However, if you still feel that they are in any way inferior to our usual standard, we want you to return them to us, for although we would like to make you a better price and have you keep them as you suggest in your letter, we cannot consistently do so, as the expense involved in the quality and workmanship of these shoes does not permit of lowering the price.

You have been one of our best customers for many years and it is reasonable to believe that you have every confidence in us. We are just as much interested in the quality of our goods as you are, since your satisfied customers mean repeat orders for us. It would hardly seem

possible, therefore, that we would jeopardize your good account by sending you goods which are not up to our standard in every particular.

Sincerely yours,

(*d*)

Dear Madam:

Your account has been credited in the amount of $15.95 for a suitcase. The receipted bill for August showing this credit is mailed to you in this letter.

We take pleasure in thanking you for your patronage.

Yours very truly,

(*e*)

Dear Mrs. Babthorne:

In looking over our charge accounts, we regret to see that some time has elapsed since you availed yourself of the privileges of your own account. We trust, however, that the service rendered to you in the past was entirely commensurate with Altman standards.

Whatever may be the reason for the non-use of your account, we shall appreciate an expression from you. We wish to assure you that it is our earnest desire to have you resume your shopping relations with us and we place at your command our entire facilities.

Very truly yours,

How does the foregoing letter compare with those quoted in the text, for structure, paragraphing, diction, sentence structure, and tone?

(*f*) Analyze the following letter carefully. Can you improve any of the sentences?

Dear Sir:

Your letter of November 6 in regard to our request for payment of your telephone account has been referred to me for attention.

In this connection we desire to assure you that our collection methods are not directed against you personally, but rather constitute a general practice which we have adopted only after long experience and careful study, to insure fair and equitable treatment to the public and reasonable protection to the company.

You will appreciate that in a business as large as ours, involving the monthly billing and collecting of many thousands of accounts, mostly for small amounts, it is necessary that some uniform practice for gen-

eral application be established, as it is impracticable to adopt regulations that will meet the conditions of each specific case. Any elaborate credit scheme to determine the precise manner of making collections from the individual subscribers would result in a routine not only cumbersome but also costly, and as the costs of operating the business as a whole necessarily must be borne by those served, such a plan would not be in the interest of subscribers generally.

With respect to the request for payment to which you refer, you will recall that this was not made until a reasonable time had elapsed after your bill was mailed, and this is the treatment given all subscribers under similar conditions. The bill itself, you will remember, also bore a printed notice stating the period within which payment should be made.

It is the desire of the company to be courteous at all times to you and to its other subscribers, and we trust that the foregoing will make clear our attitude and satisfy you as to the reasonableness of our collection methods.

Yours very truly,

(*g*) What kind of letter is the following? Is it too long? If so, just why? If not, why not?

Dear Sir:

This company is furnishing you with party line service under call number 7901 Leonia. Party line service involves the joint use of a single line by two or more subscribers. Each subscriber has his individual telephone, but a message to or from any one of the telephones makes use of the entire circuit and prevents other parties on that line from sending or receiving telephone calls until the conversation is completed and the circuit released.

The party line telephone has made it possible to give service at a moderate rate. Good service, however, is something more than a matter of instruments, wires, and company operators. It depends in some measure on the co-operation of subscribers with the company, and in the case of party lines, upon the fairness and consideration shown by each subscriber to the other parties on his line.

Each subscriber on the line, of course, is entitled to telephone service and should be permitted to talk without interruption or annoyance, and the privacy of his conversation respected. The use of the telephone for long periods repeatedly by any single subscriber on a party line is somewhat beyond the purpose of a service designed to be equitably shared with others.

The observance of the following points will aid materially in insuring good party line service. When the receiver is lifted from the hook and the line found in use, the receiver should be hung up immediately. While the receiver is off the hook, the other party's conversation is interfered with. It is particularly important that no attempt be made to operate the receiver hook, or in the case of machine switching service to rotate the dial, when the line is determined to be in use. Under no circumstances should the receiver be placed against the transmitter. Since certain subscribers on your line are experiencing difficulty in securing good service, this letter is being sent to all parties on the line to see whether this undesirable condition may not be eliminated. May we have your full co-operation in this matter?

Yours very truly,

(*h*)

Dear Sir:

I am very glad of this opportunity to explain to you our charges for the local messages sent from your telephone during the months of August to November inclusive.

A further investigation of our records was made after our representative's interviews with you, that revealed no errors or mechanical trouble with your telephone. I have, therefore, no hesitancy in assuring you that our charges as rendered represent only the actual service furnished from your station.

A few local messages are of little consequence to this company in the aggregate of a year's business—as measured against the satisfaction of our subscribers. Please allow me to call your attention to the following conditions and facts in the hope that you will agree with us in the accuracy of our records.

The charges for local messages in our system are based on a record made upon a highly developed scientific apparatus which is handled by trained operators. Their work is performed under strict and constant supervision during the entire twenty-four hours each day. As the operator who controls this apparatus has but a single function to perform, namely, that of handling outgoing calls, a high degree of accuracy is insured. On the other hand, without intending to detract from the efficiency of your own methods, I believe that your office telephone and its operation form but a minor part of your business activities. I also assume that the same degree of attention does not exist in your office as in our central office and that therefore it is likely that omissions are made in your record of calls emanating from your telephone.

In view of the foregoing, I believe that the discrepancies are not due to any inaccuracies in our system and consequently I do not feel that any allowance is justified.

May I receive a prompt remittance of $87.07, the amount which is due on your account covering all charges up to December 31, 1924?

Very truly yours,

P. S. In order to acquaint you with our operating methods and that you may observe the precautions taken to prevent overcharges, I am inclosing an invitation for you to view one of our central offices.

Why is the last letter not classified with collection letters?

(*i*)

Gentlemen:

We are just as sorry as you are that the magazines promised for the 10th of this month were not delivered until the 14th.

The delay was caused because the mills did not deliver the paper on time, so that we were compelled to make an emergency purchase elsewhere.

I realize that a few copies were not bound as well as most of the edition, but I think that you will agree with me that, on the whole, the edition was printed and bound as well as in your previous order. It is our wish to give your work our best attention, and we would appreciate your calling our attention to unsatisfactory work.

Yours truly,

(*j*)

Dear Sir:

Yours of recent date received and contents noted. Would advise you to hold transportation company for damages. Kindly note inclosed form.

Trusting that this will meet with your approval, we remain,

Respectfully yours,

(*k*)

Dear Madam:

Our records show that the beads referred to in your letter of July 6 went forward to you on July 11, and we hope have reached you safely. We regret the delay which has occurred in forwarding these to you.

Yours very truly,

(*l*)

Dear Sir:

We are in receipt of your notation on our statement of September 1 covering a copy of Gosse's "The Continuity of Literature" which you advise us never was received by you.

On looking up our records we find that a copy of this book was sent you from this office under date of June 5. Perhaps you were away from the college during the summer and therefore did not receive it. We would suggest that you make inquiries at the receiving room of the college, where it may be held for you.

If you are unable to locate this shipment and still desire to examine this book, we shall be glad to send you a duplicate copy immediately upon receipt of your further word.

Very truly yours,

(*m*)

Dear Sirs:

Your letter of the 8th inst. received and contents noted.

Are surprised you did not receive shipment of walnut beds in good condition.

Beds left shipping room at this end in perfect condition.

It is now up to you to take the matter up with the R.R. as our responsibility ended when we placed beds with the R.R.

Very truly yours,

Does the following criticism by a correspondence supervisor cover all essential points with regard to the last letter?

Your letter to Laury & Jones in regard to the walnut beds has just come to my attention. I should like to make a few suggestions to you about it.

In the first place, remember that when you write a letter on our stationery you are representing this firm to the person to whom the letter is addressed. Therefore, you should write him the best letter you can.

Now, let's take up your letter. Don't you think "Gentlemen" sounds better than "Dear Sirs"? "Yours of the 8th inst." sounds like some old dusty office on a side street where they still write invoices by hand, doesn't it? Let's make it, "Your letter of January 8." Never tell a customer that you are surprised that the goods were damaged. That is unnecessary. Tell him that you have investigated thoroughly and that they were correctly packed before they left us.

Then be easy and more or less detailed in explaining to him that the railroad is responsible for the damage. As he does not seem to know how to collect from the railroad, tell him that we shall assist him in filing the claim if he will send us the bill of lading.

You have not been farsighted enough to see the customer's point of view. How would you feel if you had received this letter? Personally, I would feel grieved to the point of discontinuing business relations.

You have failed to indicate the spirit of coöperation. Sound the keynote of coöperation throughout.

Even if it was not our fault, we are sorry it happened. Tell him so. It will make a better friend of him.

Now about the ending. It is best to make it formal and short. Why not say what you have to say and then put "Yours truly." He will like it better that way than dangling after a hope.

Carefully analyze (*n*) and (*o*) below to determine how successfully they incorporate the essential qualities of the type of adjustment they represent. The first letter was written by an adjustment manager with twenty years' experience in making adjustments for a large corporation. The second letter was written by a woman correspondent with less experience.

(*n*)

Gentlemen:

The charge of $7.50 for the half-tone cut we made for you, to which your letter of August 3 has reference, covers only the actual cost of manufacture.

Your impression that the charge is excessive is understandable, for the cost of producing such cuts varies greatly. Not only the fineness and clearness of the reproductions, but also the quality of the printing paper affect materially the labor charge involved in making any particular cut.

Our engravers are employees of long standing who know thoroughly the quality of paper and type of presses we use. They consequently are in a position to do their work with a minimum loss of time and are able to produce precisely the results required.

After taking into consideration these factors, you will, we are confident, willingly remit the full amount of our statement. You have our assurance that the charge is regular and in accordance with our established rates.

Very truly yours,

(*o*)

Gentlemen:

We are glad that your frank letter of August 3 gives us an opportunity to explain our charge of $7.50 for the cut made for your advertisement in the July issue of the Copper Industry Journal.

Upon receiving your letter we immediately investigated our records of the transaction and found that $7.50 was the actual cost of the cut to our firm.

As we wrote you on June 17, we are willing that our customers should furnish their own cuts. We offer our service in this connection as a favor to our friends and without profit to ourselves.

A large majority of our customers prefer to have us make the cuts for two reasons: (1) This method saves time and trouble. (2) Their advertisements appear to better advantage when the cuts are made by our expert engravers who specialize in cuts for the particular quality of paper we use in our magazine.

We sincerely trust that you were pleased with the appearance of your advertisement and that the results will convince you that the total amount of the bill, $186.75, has been money profitably spent. We shall consider it a privilege if you will write us whenever we may be of any possible service to you.

Very truly yours,

Analyze (*p*), (*q*), and (*r*) below, written by a large department store in New York to its customers. Point out essential qualities as they are observed and as they are violated, keeping before you the type of letter each adjustment represents.

(*p*)

Dear Madam:

Your letter of February 28 about the silk which did not give satisfaction has been received.

An analytical test of the silk proves your contention. The fabric was tender and we are indebted to you for calling it to our attention, thereby giving us an opportunity to please a valued patron.

Your account has been credited for $9.95, the cost of the silk, and $5.00 for the expense you incurred in having the garment made.

Yours very truly,

(*q*)

Dear Madam:

Your order of March 3 was shipped by the Mallory Line on March 6. If, after inquiries have been made at the steamship office in your city, the chairs and table cannot be located, kindly make known to us your desires. We will either duplicate your order or refund the purchase price.

Yours very truly,

(*r*)

Dear Sir:

We wish to quote our advertisement featuring the overcoats of the kind you mention in your letter of March 4, "that while the large, luxurious, fleecy, napped coats were in demand, our cheviots, combined both good looks and wearing qualities that could not be surpassed." It may be, now that this phase of the purchase is brought to your attention, you will understand our position. In any event, the next time you are in this vicinity, call in to see us. We shall be glad to examine the coat and give you our opinion.

Yours truly,

3. Criticize the following letters. Then rewrite them.

(*a*)

Dear Madam:

It is so long since you have been in to see us that we are writing to ask if there has been any cause for complaint.

Our constant aim is to give satisfaction, but sometimes mistakes will occur. Have we done anything to cause you displeasure?

If we have, won't you tell us about it so that we may make the necessary corrections late though it is?

We have recently enlarged our store in order to accommodate the increasing patronage with which we are honored. Despite these improvements we shall be unable to maintain our reputation for service unless our customers are kind enough to inform us when accidents happen.

Won't you please write us, telling how we may be of service to you?

Very truly yours,

Vice-President.

(*b*)

Dear Madam:

Our ledger shows your account was inactive during January and we prefer to think this was due to your absence from the City rather than to any other cause.

At this season of the year new things are coming in every day. Prices of winter wearables yet remaining are made most attractive. This is an especially opportune time for you to visit our store.

We never forget those who have honored us with their confidence and patronage. May we remind you that The Hub now, as ever, is the superlative in merchandising and hospitality.

Cordially yours,

Credit Manager.

(The foregoing letter was typed on a regular monthly statement used by the store.)

II. Problems in Writing Letters of Adjustment.

1. Write a claim letter to the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad, basing your letter on the facts in the problem indicated by the letter on page 378.

2. Write the claim letter to which the letter on page 376 is the response.

3. Write the claim letter to which the adjustment letter on page 379 is the response.

4. With the headings on page 376 as a guide, make appropriate structural headings for each of the letters quoted to illustrate the four types of adjustment letter on pages 377-381.

5. Mr. E. Joiner, 453 Willow Street, Omaha, Nebraska, a credit customer, writes that he cannot accept the case of canned peaches you shipped with his last order. The wrappers on the cans are so badly soiled that he cannot put them on his shelves. Apparently the case has been wet. The other goods are satisfactory. He writes that the box shows signs of having become wet but that he did not notice this external evidence until he had unpacked the cans.

Your records show that the goods were received by the shipper in good condition. The cans must have become wet in transit. You are forwarding a duplicate shipment at the

same price. As you cannot use the peaches for resale, and as he has taken them out of the hands of the carrier, induce Mr. Joiner to keep them. Offer him a twenty per cent reduction. As the contents are perfect, suggest that he put the soiled cans on special sale.

(1) Write Mr. Joiner's letter to your company. (2) Write the company's letter to Mr. Joiner.

6. Mrs. Ethel Worden, 876 Clarendon Street, Atlanta, Georgia, subscribed to your magazine, *The Thrifty Housewife*, on September 20. The agent assured her that she would receive the first copy of *The Thrifty Housewife* on October 1. She paid for the subscription, but it is now October 9 and she has not received your magazine.

You find that her name is not on your list of subscribers. You have never employed agents to secure subscriptions. Ask Mrs. Worden for full details concerning the date on which she subscribed, the name and appearance of the agent, the receipt she received from him, and any other details you deem necessary for tracing the man who swindled Mrs. Worden. If you alarm her, she may not send the desired information, which is valuable to you in tracing the impostor.

(1) Write the letter to Mrs. Worden. (2) Assuming that Mrs. Worden has answered your questions and has sent the receipt, write her a letter of thanks and inform her that you are putting her name on your list of subscribers for one year in spite of the fact that you are under no obligation to do so, as you have absolutely no connection with the man who swindled her, whom you will make every effort to trace and punish. Sell your service.

7. Mrs. Lois Grose, 48 Rose Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana, an old customer, protests against your charge of $2.48 a yard for four yards of the silk poplin you sent in response to her order. She understood the price to be $1.98 a yard.

You discover that this price is quoted in an old catalogue. Two catalogues have been issued since. The latest edition, dated one month before you received her order, quotes the poplin at $2.48 a yard. She should have received a new catalogue. You are therefore willing to give her the quotation of $2.37 in the previous catalogue from which she should have ordered. Quality for quality your silks are priced lower than those of competitors. Send her the latest catalogue.

8. Mr. A. Bartlett, whose wife is a well-rated charge customer, came into your department store to buy a pair of roller skates for his son. When he arrived at the counter, two clerks, who were talking and joking, paid no attention to him. After he had examined several pairs of roller skates lying on the counter, he ventured to request one of the clerks to show him the proper skates for a boy five years old. The clerk did not do as much as step toward him but simply waved his hand toward the skates on the counter. Upon consulting the nearest floor manager, Mr. Bartlett was told that what he said could not be possible. So Mr. Bartlett, who had never bought a pair of roller skates and did not know the proper type for a young boy, went across the street to your competitor and bought a pair of skates for $6.00. He does not care to enter your store again.—Write a letter conciliating Mr. Bartlett and apologizing for the discourtesy offered him. Remember that his wife has been a steady and very profitable customer.

9. Assume that you are employed as correspondent for the Bell Telephone Company, Your City, and that you receive the following report from your outside representative:

After a personal interview with Mr. Robert Ellen, 409 Butt Street, telephone number Brintley 7098, I wish to report that he will not accept my verbal explanation of the charges. The charges for local messages billed for the months of August, September, October, and November are correct. Verification of all records has been made. No mechanical trouble was discovered. He desires a full explanation in writing.

Write the letter.

10. (1) Write a criticism pointing out specifically how the following letters fail to make an adjustment. The claim explained definitely that the heater is not operating satisfactorily (the cellar is overheated but the rooms are difficult to heat) and asked for service to remedy the situation. The claim letter included the statement, "As I purchased this house last November, and as the owner has moved out of the city, I do not know who installed the boiler in the autumn of 1924."—Use the criticism on page 389 as a model.

(*a*)

12/19/23

Mr. A. Burton,
Leonia, N. J.

Dear Sir:—

We are in receipt of your letter of the 17th in regard to the RADIANT Boiler installed in your home. We are sending you card of directions for operating the boiler and would suggest that you get in touch with our New York office at 359 West 42nd Street.

They will be glad to give you all the information that you require to make this heater operate successfully.

Yours very truly,

IDEAL FURNACE COMPANY.

(This letter carried no personal signature.)

(*b*)

New York Office, Jan. 3, 1924.

Mr. A. Burton,
Leonia, N. J.

Dear Sir:

We have your letter of the 28th ult., in reference to the Boiler installed in your home.

From the complaints you make, we find that it is not the fault of the Boiler that you do not get the desired results, but due to the installation of system.

We would advise that you get in touch with the party who made the installation.

Yours very truly,

IDEAL FURNACE COMPANY.

(This letter carried no personal signature.)

(2) Rewrite the second letter.

11. Rewrite the following letters, making any changes in structure and phrasing you deem necessary to make the letter modern and effective.

(*a*)

Gentlemen:

Replying to your letter of Feb. 18th in regard to the linings which you have on back order, we wish to state that these are new goods

coming for February 1st delivery and we are receiving some of these goods every day. However, the patterns which you ordered have not yet arrived. We are writing the manufacturer again today that if he has not already sent these goods to hurry them forward by express and we hope to be able to ship your order within a few days, for which we ask your indulgence.

With kind regards, we are

Yours very truly,

(*b*)

Dear Doctor:

We are inclosing postage to cover the return of the Skelly Grinder to us here, and we will attach your Grusi Articulator. The factory evidently made a mistake in your case and sent the Grinder direct to you instead of to us, as they have done in other cases, as we much prefer to mount the Articulator, although the operation is not a hard one. We are very sorry that this mistake was made and if you will kindly forward the Grinder to us we will immediately return it to you correctly attached for working.

Very truly,

(*c*)

Gentlemen:

We thank you for your letter of February 7th, advising that freight bill covering the two barrels Zinc Oxide shipped on December 20th has been sent to your auditing company in Philadelphia.

We would appreciate it very much indeed if it would be possible for you to secure a copy of this paid freight bill from your agent at Allentown, Pennsylvania.

We are certain this could be secured without any trouble and assure you that your co-operation in this connection will be greatly appreciated.

Yours very truly,

12. Write the letter in response to the following claim. It is the second written by the customer.

Gentlemen:

If you had to wait for a meal as long as I have had to wait for your repair man, you would have starved by this time.

The typewriter is vital to my income, and the loss of use even for one day is a great hardship. I waited two weeks for delivery, and I have now waited two weeks more for your Mr. Wayte. You will remember that you guaranteed immediate shipment. You also prom-

ised a perfect machine and good service, and yet the machine failed to operate satisfactorily within an hour after I had begun to use it.

You have not fulfilled any part of your contract, although I sent you the initial payment on time and also the first installment.

I will return the machine if satisfactory repairs are not made within forty-eight hours from the receipt of this letter. It is now eleven A.M., March 7, 1925.

Very truly yours,

13. Answer the following letter:

Gentlemen:

I was surprised to learn from your letter of September 7, that you have no record in your sales files of the return privilege granted me on the Victrola I purchased last July. This seems most extraordinary, as your salesman stated that I would be allowed to return the Victrola within one month and receive a rebate of ten dollars.

In view of the statement made to me by one of your employes, I feel that you will readily see that I am justified in expecting a rebate. Inclosed is a duplicate copy of the purchase slip which shows the number and the size of the Victrola, its price, and the salesman's name.

I shall appreciate your immediate attention to this matter, as I am desirous of getting a rebate, as promised.

Yours truly,

Milton Irvington.

Mr. Irvington paid down $25 with the understanding that he had the privilege of using the machine for two weeks on his summer holiday and that if he did not wish to keep it he might return it within a month, receiving an allowance of ten dollars. As conditions made it impossible for him to return to the city, he sent the machine by express. It arrived safely and showed no signs of anything but careful use. You have verified the sales slip and find it valid.

Chapter XIII

THE LETTER OF APPLICATION

To write a good letter of application is surely the crowning achievement of a successful writer of business letters. What he has learned in the process of selling tangible goods and intangible good will, he now applies to his own most personal problem.

Selling one's services in the mart of modern commerce is, if practiced well, a most rewarding occupation. Tact and sound judgment are indispensable. The character, ability, and capacity of the seeker after a better position are revealed clearly to the seeing eyes of able executives by the manner in which the applicant selects, organizes, and phrases his letter material.

The letter of application is one of the most important links in the chain of business activities, not only for the applicant but also for the employer. By means of it the employer who is careful to secure the right man for a vacancy can, at the outset, quickly and unobtrusively eliminate undesirable applicants. It enables him, moreover, to get in touch with a greater number of likely candidates than would be possible under any other circumstances, because the letter affords the applicant a confidential means of putting his services at the disposal of a chosen employer.

Kinds of letters of application.—There are two great classes of letters of application: (1) *Solicited letters* are those written in response to advertisements (want ads). (2) *Unsolicited letters* are written (*a*) when the applicant hears of a vacancy or when he writes at the suggestion of some one who knows the prospective employer and his need for a man, or (*b*) when the applicant writes on the chance that there is or will be an opening which he is qualified to fill.

The letter of application is competitive. Because the vast majority are written in response to wants made known through

advertisements, the applicant's letter is one of scores and, very frequently, of hundreds of letters with which his must compete. As a rule, the solicited application is made for positions paying an average wage or salary. When a high-salaried man applies for a position, he usually does so because he has heard of a desirable vacancy, for which he applies without having been solicited by the employer. On the other hand, the man seeking to better himself may have decided that he wishes to establish connection with a certain firm. He writes a letter on speculation, purposing to interest the employer in his abilities, so that when an opening occurs, his application will be considered. Although letters of this type are not as numerous in the aggregate, for a given position, as the solicited letters, nationally known firms always have on file a representative number of unsolicited applications. These will receive favorable consideration when a vacancy occurs. In this connection it should be remembered that the application is always competitive. To receive favorable consideration, the application must therefore stand out.

Character, ability, capacity.—To make an impression, the application must incorporate the seven qualities of business writing, but especially *character*. Most people engaged in business have at some time or other written letters of application. Whatever is done by most people is most often done badly. As this applies to the type of letter considered in this chapter, you can make your character stand out if you show a spirit of initiative, building the message so that it reveals your personality. Personality is that quality which makes a person attractively different from his fellows. Let your letter bear the stamp of your personality.

The employer, furthermore, looks for *ability*. Ability can be demonstrated by reference to education, training, and experience. The application is in itself an indication that the applicant desires the position. The employer gives favorable consideration if he can find an impressive answer to the question, "Why does this man think he is fitted for this position?"

You must, finally, show *capacity*. Capacity is the power to grow, develop, and expand with the increasing responsibilities of one's position. The far-seeing executive, with a vision of expanding and ever-growing business activities, must

have helpers able to keep one step ahead of the requirements of the positions they hold. Let your letter, therefore, show your ambition to assume greater responsibilities.

The prospective employer is inevitably and vitally interested in you when your message radiates your personality, your proved ability to work, and your capacity for growth.

The principle of adaptation.—The impressive letter of application harmonizes the ability of the applicant and the needs of the employer. It leads, if successful, to an interview.

What you write and the manner in which you write it must meet the requirements of the position you seek. Write, therefore, from the point of view of the employer. Visualize not only the man himself but also the duties of the person he will employ. Present your preparation, training, and experience in their relation to the specific use the employer can make of them.

Study the employer's business.—Then ask yourself, "What in my experience and training fits the needs of the man to whom I am writing?" Your general qualifications should be sifted until you find precisely those elements that focus directly and unmistakably on the employer's business. If, for example, you have discovered a special gift for making adjustments, and therefore desire a broader field to develop your ability, concentrate on those phases of your training and experience which especially fit you for the assumption of the larger responsibilities of the position you seek in the adjustment department.

Exhibit your interest in the employer's business.—Genuine interest in his business, together with straightforward but modest confidence in your ability to give constructive aid in his plans for development, is the key to favorable attention.

Show initiative.—Show what you will mean to the business if you are employed. Believe in yourself. Know what you want: determine to get it. Cheerfulness is an indispensable because contagious quality in business. To assure the desirable air of optimism and self-reliance, keep the position you have, however undesirable it may be. A man out of a job invariably allows an air of anxiety to creep into his letter. Worry eats out the heart of self-reliance. When a man feels that he must have the position, wholesome eagerness for advancement shades perceptibly into overeagerness and anxiety.

These are falsettos which the employer is keen to note. Reasonable confidence in yourself begets confidence in others.

The use of "I" is not objectionable.—Adaptation to the requirements of the desired position does not exclude the use of "I." *You* are selling *your* services. *Your* personality and *your* training and experience are the most interesting things in the letter. The reader will not be offended if you use "I" when you need to, provided the tone of the letter is in other respects modest. A conscious attempt to avoid "I" by means of circumlocutions leads to violation of compactness, and establishes an atmosphere of artificiality which itself may give an impression of insincerity or lack of faith in yourself.

The letter reproduced below represents a successful application for the position advertised as follows: "Football coach wanted—Young man who has not only had football experience but one who also is qualified particularly to handle boys. State age and qualifications. Mr. G. H. Povey, Povey Preparatory School, Middletown, New York."

Dear Sir:

"Particularly qualified to handle boys." That statement in your advertisement in the New York "Times" this morning appealed to me.

I shall be twenty-three when I graduate this June.

I played football for four years at Brunswick School. I received a thorough experience also in directing extra-curricular activities.

Upon my graduation in 1917 I entered the Merchant Marine. The following year I enlisted in the Navy. I was assigned to the training station at Hampton Roads for four months of my year's service. I know I broadened my experience in handling boys considerably while training recruits there.

In 1919 I entered Dartmouth and played football that year on the freshman team under Coach Giles. Next year I played under Coach Spears. During the last two years I have been under the direction of Coach Cannel.

I enjoy studying boys. My rôle in the fraternity has been that of general adviser to the underclassmen.

I like football and I like boys. I should like to have the opportunity to prove that I am qualified to make football in your school a factor in helping the boy find the man.

May I have an interview?

Very truly yours,

This letter reveals character. It gives the principal of the preparatory school a picture of a wide-awake, active, wholesome young man with American ideals. The letter focuses, in every sentence, on the needs of the employer. The writer allows the facts to speak for themselves, but he adds, in the closing paragraphs, a frank expression of his interest in boys, treating this interest, however, as a fact. Although the "I" is used more frequently than is absolutely necessary, it is not, in this letter, obtrusive or offensive.

Facts and opinions.—Although the application should give an index of the writer's character, many applicants weaken their appeals by unguarded statements of opinion. Pertinent facts concerning education, training, and experience must be included, and there is no objection to an expression of opinion concerning these, provided always that the opinion is modestly and tactfully phrased. Opinions, however, are not essential. The writer's references, which will be investigated, bring past and present successes to the employer's attention. Although the writer must not leave himself out of the letter, he must guard against inept phrasings that do not produce the intended impression. Written words are colder than spoken words. The identical statement which in a personal interview is not objectionable—because of face expression, tone of voice, and gestures—may nevertheless be unfortunate when it is typed on a letter sheet.

Obtrusive: I recently completed a course in the Bridlington School of Filing. I am competent not only to install a filing system that will meet the needs of your bank, but also to operate it successfully.

Modest: The course which I completed in the Bridlington School of Filing was planned to prepare me for successfully installing and operating a filing system like that in your bank.

Assertive: Since my graduation I have gained practical experience in the filing department of a large Trust Company in New York. I am thoroughly competent and can unfailingly make an intelligent application of modern filing methods to the specific needs of your business.

Modest: My practical experience in the filing department of a large Trust Company in New York has taught me how to make intelligent application of modern filing methods to the specific needs of your business.

Opinionated: I am bright, experienced, and take pleasure in my work. ("Bright" is offensive.)

Character: My references will prove that I have been alert, capable, and conscientious. (Stated more as historical fact.)

It should be remembered, however, that the greater the self-confidence of the applicant, the greater the confidence of the employer; and that the more timid the applicant, the less confident the employer. It is fatal to allow the phrasing to show weakness or doubt. The phrasing should be as strong and frank as the facts allow. Nevertheless, it must be remembered, in this connection, that unguarded expression of opinion about one's self is almost always offensive. The examples given above indicate how to convert a conceivably offensive opinion into a confidence-inspiring statement of fact. The following examples show how to change a weak statement into one that has character.

Weak: I feel that I would make good as manager of your adjustment department.

Character: I am certain that I can perform the exacting duties of the manager of your adjustment department. *Or:* I am confident that my experience and my references show that I can perform the exacting duties of the manager of . . .

Weak: My training ought to help me, and my experience in my present position would enable me to give complete satisfaction.

Character: My training prepared me for just such a position as that now open, and the experience I have gained in my present position will enable me to solve the most difficult problems faced by the man you employ.

Weak: I could easily adapt myself to the routine of your office.

Strong: I can rapidly adapt myself to the routine of your office.

The florid style.—When applying for a position, many young people falsely consider it necessary to adopt an impressive style. A florid or bookish style is never in place in business writing, least of all in a letter of application. Inflated diction gives an impression of insincerity or affectation. In either case the employer is unfavorably impressed. The tone of the letter should be frank and straightforward; the diction, simple and businesslike.

Florid: I am in earnest in my endeavor to secure a position with your company and to seek the just rewards of proved ability.

Inflated: The fact is, I have amassed unusual experience as a result of years of assiduous labor.

Because of adverse circumstances, my education has been retarded, but what I have been compelled to omit in extent of education I have endeavored to compensate by continual application to special studies in the field to which the activities of the unoccupied position in your establishment appertain.

Such unconvincing sentences, taken directly from actual letters written by ambitious but untrained young men, show that the writers are unfit for business or that they labor under the delusion that high-sounding words are a sign of education. Observe how genuine and refreshing the following simple sentences are by comparison.

I feel qualified to fill the position efficiently. I think so not only because my students who took part in state-wide contests won prizes, but also because my superiors have been pleased with my work.

Remember, furthermore, that the material should be phrased to suit the point of view of the employer. It is not sufficient to select the contents with his needs and desires in mind, but you must keep before you the individuality and character of the person addressed. Some men like a breezy style; others prefer a more conservative phrasing. Even if you cannot know the individual who will read your letter, you can familiarize yourself with the house character of the firm. Adapt your style to the prevailing house character. If you really want the position for which you are applying, the time and energy you spend on such important considerations are invested to advantage. You may be certain that most of the applicants will not trouble themselves about these important details. The prevailing negligence gives you an opportunity to make your message stand out in the competition for the position.

Correctness is important.—Fragmentary sentences, careless punctuation, misspelling, and other similar faults are but so many indications of carelessness and incompetency. The story is told of the applicant for a ten-thousand-dollar position, who failed to receive favorable consideration because he closed his letter with the statement, "I will be glad to submit to a rigid examination in a personal interview at your call." The employer remarked that the position in question carried too great responsibility in details to be entrusted to

a man so careless about details as not to have informed himself on the correct use of "shall" and "will."

The structure of the letter.—The letter of application is a sales letter. It sells service. The principles of letter salesmanship should be applied to the fine art of selling your services to the best advantage. Awaken the curiosity of the prospective employer. Turn curiosity into interest. Convert interest into desire. Establish contact by asking for an interview. In the interview, establish conviction.

With few exceptions the complete letter of application contains the following headings:

1. Purpose of the letter.
2. Age and education.
3. Experience.
4. References (preferred to testimonials)—character, ability.
5. Request for an interview.

The purpose of the letter is always stated at the outset; age, education, experience, and references are stated so as to persuade the employer; and the request for an interview always closes the letter.

1. *Compelling attention.*—The unsolicited application must, like any other sales letter, have an interest-compelling first sentence. Even the solicited application is not certain to be read unless it has an attention-catching first sentence. Give thought, then, to your opening sentence.

The indirect opening has no attention value. The following openings are weak because they are indirect:

(1) A capable secretary is an asset in any business. A reliable and conscientious secretary is a great help to the business man. In your advertisement you state that you want a capable secretary—one who can take dictation rapidly, and who has some knowledge of accounting. You also state that you want a secretary who has a command of good business English.

The entire solicited application from which this opening is taken is as wordy as this opening paragraph. The moralizing tone of the opening sentence is unbusinesslike. The unnecessary restatement of the requirements kills interest.

(2) You are the judge and, as in court, the defendant must give reasons for taking the stand he does in order to convince his hearers. (Solicited.)
(3) Are you interested in modern business methods? (This letter continues to generalize like the first example.)

The customary *participial opening* is always weak. It is not necessary to state where you saw the advertisement.

Hackneyed: Replying to your advertisement in this morning's *Times,* I hereby submit my application for the position as purchasing clerk in your grocery department.
Direct: I wish to be considered for the position of purchasing clerk in your grocery department.

The following openings are *direct* and to the point. They also avoid the stereotyped approach certain to be used by most applicants. These openings, furthermore, immediately answer the employer's question, "What does the applicant want?" As this question is always uppermost in the employer's mind, the application, whether solicited or unsolicited, may safely begin with a statement like those that follow.

(1) Will you need a stenographer during July and August to substitute for your stenographers while they are on their vacations? (Unsolicited.)
(2) I am certain that I can make good as correspondent in your collection department. (Solicited.)
(3) As I am confident that I can teach the commercial subjects in your school, I am submitting my qualifications for your consideration. (Solicited, but also good for an unsolicited letter.)

2. *Suggestive opening.*—When the answer is suggested but not precisely expressed, the writer must be certain that the opening sentence does definitely suggest (imply) the answer. The attention-getter must be relevant.

(1) For two years (1922-1924) I was secretary to Mr. J. H. Purdy, manager of your Denver branch, whose letter of introduction I inclose. After a year in Europe, where I visited my mother, I desire to enter the employ of your company in its New York offices as secretary or correspondent. (Unsolicited.)

(2) My training in the School of Business at Columbia University and my three years' experience as marketing expert with Alcomb & Hall, New York, lead me to believe that you will consider me for the impor-

tant position now vacant in your marketing department. (Solicited, but also suitable for an unsolicited application.)

(3) Nine years ago the writer of this letter began as dishwasher in a large hotel, but he worked his way step by step to the position of manager. Then he traveled for three years, working and studying methods in over forty recognized hotels in twenty-three states. He has a position, but now seeks the opportunity to apply his knowledge and experience to the problem of developing your publications so that they will realize the wonderful opportunities the hotel market provides for them. Will you employ a man whose preparation has familiarized him with every detail of hotel operation and management? (Unsolicited.) (Observe that the narrative opening grips attention.)

3. *Persuading the employer.*—To persuade the employer that you are the man for the position, answer this question: "Why does the applicant feel qualified to fill this position?" The statement of reasons why you feel qualified should always be *simple, frank, definite,* and *complete.*

This part of the letter is characterized by simplicity in contents and phrasing. All statements should be definite and explicit. Vague generalizations arouse a negative impression and, moreover, suggest that the applicant is incapable of precise and clear-cut thinking. Nothing unrelated to the special needs of the position is admissible. To avoid suspicion and unfavorable interpretation, do not leave gaps in the record of experience.

After you have selected your material, determine upon the grouping that most persuasively sets forth the facts of your preparation and experience. Analysis reveals the core thought. This central selling thought is the outstanding fact or qualification, the one that will impress the employer most favorably. All other facts, ideas, and data should be grouped so as to focus upon and stress this outstanding qualification. The same careful judgment and ingenuity used in the organization of the sales letter should be applied to the letter of application.

This part of the letter states the facts of your age, education, and experience. Here, also, you give your references. The stated order of these headings is customarily observed. Certain departures, however, are permissible and, often, desirable. Whatever the order of these headings, they are used

to create desire and persuade the employer to grant you an interview.

Ordinarily the matter of salary is left for discussion in the interview. If not, the salary expected is stated after the section on experience and before the paragraph on references.

When the advertisement specifies headings upon which the employer desires information, these should be followed in the order in which they appear in the advertisement. Additional headings may be used or not, according to the judgment of the applicant.

In applying for important positions with high salaries, the applicant may vary the order of the second, third, and fourth headings if he is certain that he can present his material more persuasively in his own way.

In special cases, for example, it may seem desirable to discuss experience before education, especially when education is less important than experience. Or, again, if the applicant's most convincing qualifications are based on experience, it is good strategy to bury the less convincing educational features in the middle of the letter. The normal order is effective when education needs to be stressed, or when the applicant's educational qualifications are stronger than his experience.

References and recommendations constitute the preliminary evidence for establishing conviction. Because letters of recommendation are easy to get, they carry less weight than good references. References are more important in some instances than in others. A bank, for example, or a well-established house, usually investigates more carefully than a new, rapidly expanding concern. References should be specific, especially in identifying the official position of the person whose name is used as a reference.

References may be supplemented by other forms of evidence. A secretary or stenographer can show ability by typing the letter according to the most approved modern usage. A commercial artist may submit—or offer to submit in the interview—specimens of his work. A copywriter may include specimens of successful copy.

References should be made with permission. It is good policy to request permission to use the name of an individual or a firm, and, also, to inform the person that you have used his name, and in what connection.

Letters of recommendation should be copied. Never allow the original to leave your possession. Send a copy, clearly marked with the word "Copy" at the top of the sheet.

Ordinarily there should not be more than three carefully selected references. These should be tabulated.

Example of how to make reference: I refer you by permission to
Mr. A. J. Biddle, Manager of Collections,
Allen and Wolton, 58 Vesey Street, New York.

Confusing: I have permission to refer you to Mrs. L. Jens, Principal of the Central High School, Muncie, Indiana; Miss Jane Brown, one of my former commercial teachers, 2657 Fifth Street, New Lebanon, Indiana; and Mr. T. H. Apple, President of Kentucky State Normal College, Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Easy to refer to: I have permission to refer you to

Mrs. L. Jens, Principal, Central High School, Muncie, Indiana.

Miss Jane Brown (one of my teachers in commercial subjects)
2657 Fifth Street, New Lebanon, Indiana.

Mr. T. H. Apple, President of Kentucky State Normal College,
Bowling Green, Kentucky.

4. *Establishing contact.*—The closing paragraph is too frequently neglected. Many otherwise good applications close with a weak thought weakly phrased.

(1) The effective close not only stimulates action, but also makes action easy. This is accomplished by a definite statement of how and when the employer may reach the applicant.

The following type of close does not establish contact:

Incomplete: I am certain that an interview will establish my fitness for this position. Yours truly,

Complete: An interview will prove that I can fill this position. You can reach me by telephone between the hours of nine and four at Leonia 901. My home telephone is Cliffside 867.

Poor: I can be reached by telephoning Gramercy 753 or at the following address.

Better: You can reach me by telephoning Gramercy 753 or by writing to the address given below.

(2) The character of the whole letter is weakened by a stereotyped close. Avoid the hackneyed participial close,

which is always weak. Avoid "hope" and "trust." In place of these, use a straightforward statement. The following locutions have been used time out of mind.

Weak: I trust I may hear from you favorably.—I hope to hear from you favorably.—I trust you will grant me an interview.—I hope you will give me an interview.—I trust you will favor me with an interview.

Weak and hackneyed: Trusting to hear favorably from you, I am—Anticipating the pleasure of an early reply, I am—Trusting to be granted an interview, I am—Trusting you will grant me an interview, I am—Awaiting your reply and hoping for an interview—Awaiting an early reply, I beg to remain.

(3) Other types of weak closing sentences follow.

Unfortunate: Please be kind enough to grant me an interview.—An early reply will be an act of courtesy.

If you think that personal contact will result favorably, I shall be glad to be interviewed at your convenience.

Veiled command: Will you please give me an interview so that I can go more thoroughly into my qualifications.

Vulgar: Call me any time on the phone (Morningside 6798) for an interview.

Effusive (written by a man): Thank you ever so much for granting me an interview.

(4) The following closing sentences are superior to those quoted above. Note that in each case the close is strong.

Strong: I am certain that I can fill the position to your complete satisfaction. You can reach me by . . .

An interview will prove my ability to meet your exacting requirements. Between nine and five you can reach me by telephoning Gramercy 0679.

An interview will enable me to substantiate my statements, etc.

If character, ability, and willingness to work are desired, I can fill the position to your complete satisfaction. You can reach me by . . .

The attention value of physical make-up—When scores of solicited applications are received in a single mailing, the employer selects the best-looking letters for first consideration. Usually he need not look further. He knows from experience that the capable applicant realizes the value of good appearance. Man instinctively inclines favorably to a well-dressed

person. The same instinct makes him favorably disposed toward a letter of good appearance.

Your letter will stand out if you give attention to the stationery and to the display of the letter on the sheet.

(1) Use the standard white business sheet, never social stationery. It pays to buy a good quality of bond paper. Use a plain sheet without a printed letterhead. Certainly never use the letterhead of the firm by which you are employed. Unless the advertisement specifically requests a pen-written letter, follow modern practice by typing your letter. Look to it that your typewriter is in good condition, especially the type-face and ribbon. A typewritten letter is conspicuous among the many pen-written letters, not only because it is typed but also because a typed letter has a clean-cut appearance.

(2) When answering a blind advertisement (one in which the name of the firm or employer is not revealed), omit the inside address and salutation. Such applications had better be tabulated. In a tabulated letter the left margin should be slightly over two inches wide.

(3) Even when the material is not tabulated—as it most often is in applications for routine positions—it is a help to clearness and good appearance to use marginal headings such as *Education, Experience,* and *References.* In letters applying for high-salaried positions such an arrangement is probably too mechanical to admit of a proper display of character.

(4) Whatever the display, adjust the black and white spaces so that the letter will be attractive to the eye.

(5) The letter of application ordinarily should not be longer than one typed page.

Adjust the material of your letter as carefully as a good salesman does his clothes before he leaves his hotel in the morning for calls on customers.

When the employer sees you step into his office for the interview which the carefully planned letter has won for you, he should be able to say, "Yes, this is the man who wrote the letter."

The application follow-up.— Often the applicant has had the privilege of a personal interview after a solicited or unsolicited application, but has not received the appointment. Or, he has had the courtesy of an acknowledgment of his unsolicited letter. It is good strategy to make use of such

an opportunity to create a favorable impression by following up the interview or acknowledgment. Such a follow-up usually takes the form of a brief, appreciative note of thanks for the courtesy that has been extended. Such a follow-up keeps your application fresh in the mind of the reader. Your tactful persistence is in your favor.

Briefly stress the qualification that especially fits you for the position. You can do this advantageously, because the interview has given you a definite, first-hand conception of the employer's needs. The follow-up should be mailed so as to reach the employer on the day after the interview; that is, at the time when he is finally considering a few selected candidates. The psychological justification of the follow-up procedure is found in the fact that the average executive admires initiative and persistence. He is inclined to favor the candidate who knows what he wants and has the backbone to go after it.

Exercises.

I. *Letters of Application for Oral Analysis and Written Revision.*

1. Analyze the following unsolicited applications. Point out the strong and the weak points in tone, phrasing, and structure. In each case put yourself in the place of the employer. Has the applicant made a strong appeal? If so, how? If not, why not?

(1)

My dear Sir:

Shall you need a stenographer during July and August to substitute for your stenographers while they are on their vacations?

I am a high school graduate with four years of successful experience, and would like to be considered for such a position.

Since my graduation from the Fort Lee High School in 1921, where I took the four-year commercial course, I have been secretary to Mr. Arthur E. Chase, Supervising Principal of the Fort Lee schools, Fort Lee, N. J. I have been reappointed for the coming year at an increased salary. To broaden my business experience, I should like to secure a position in a concern such as yours during the coming summer vacation.

Last summer I was employed as a stenographer in the Claim Department of the Third Avenue Railway Company. In this position I took much of the dictation on the typewriter direct. I also became familiar with legal forms, such as vouchers, releases, and affidavits.

This spring I took a course in Commercial Corespondence and Business English at Columbia University.

I have permission to refer you to the following:

Mr. Arthur E. Chase, Supervising Principal, Fort Lee, N. J. Telephone Fort Lee 71.
Mr. W. E. Foley, Director of Claims, Third Avenue Railway Company, 2396 Third Avenue, New York. Harlem 4140.
Mr. A. E. Stukey, Principal, Fort Lee High School, Fort Lee, N. J.

I shall be glad to arrange for a personal interview at your convenience. You can reach me by telephone between the hours of nine and four at Fort Lee 71.

Very truly yours,

(2)

My dear Sir:

My training at Columbia University has created in me a desire to become a marketing expert. For this reason, and because of the splendid reputation your firm has in the business world, I am applying for a position in your marketing department.

I am twenty-two years old.

My courses at Columbia have included Marketing, Economics, Business English, Accounting, and Commercial Law. These courses have given me a general understanding of business. Next year I expect to specialize in selling and marketing.

Although I have a very good position in the advertising department of the New York *World,* my desire is to establish a connection with a firm that offers opportunities to develop my ability in marketing.

I am willing to start at the beginning so that I can secure a good foundation and understanding of your business.

If you will let me know when it will be convenient for you to see me, I shall be at your office at that time so that you can question me concerning my qualifications.

Yours truly,

2. Criticize this solicited application by submitting it to the test of Correctness. Then rewrite the letter for correctness.

Dear Sir:

As an applicant for the position you advertise in today's *Times* beg to state I have had eight years' experience as a stenographer and in general office work.

My experience has been mostly in the publishing business as assistant to the Manager of the International Magazine Syndicate. Have also worked eight months for the manufacturers of special tools and machinery.

Have taken entire charge of office, answering correspondence, etc., during my employer's many trips out of town, taking a personal interest in any duty that was assigned to me.

Salary $30; am Christian; age 30.

Trusting my application will meet with your approval, I beg to remain

Very truly yours,

3. This letter applies for the same position as the preceding letter. In what ways is it superior? Is it convincing? Be specific.

Gentlemen:

An unusual young lady secretary seeks a position with you.

Unusual because:

Six years' extensive experience in secretarial and high grade stenographic capacities.

Rapidity and accuracy acquired by thorough application to work of a particular nature.

An initiative that is acute through skilled and constant use.

Intelligence that has been made efficient by a better than average education.

Young enough to be ambitious and adaptable, but old enough to be businesslike and conscientious.

These capabilities together with the desire to remain and grow with the business should satisfy your needs.

Very truly yours,

Salary $30.

4. The foregoing letter was considered, but the applicant did not survive the final sifting. The following letters were written in application for the same position. Why were they

immediately discarded? Be specific. They were written on social stationery.

(1)

Dear Sir:

Referring to your advertisement in Sunday's *Times* for a stenographer, I wish to apply for the position.

I am twenty-eight years old, have had a high school education, and over seven years' experience as stenographer in the machinery, engineering, and general manufacturing lines. Can furnish excellent references as to character and ability.

As to salary, would expect twenty-seven to thirty dollars per week. Hoping to be favored with an interview, I remain

Yours respectfully,

(2)

Dear Sirs:

Kindly consider me an applicant for the position of stenographer advertised in the *Times* of even date.

Protestant
Experienced
References
Age 30
Salary $23
Have a good record for punctuality.

An interview would be appreciated.

Respectfully yours,

(3)

Gentlemen:

I take the liberty of addressing you with reference to your advertisement in today's issue of the *Times*.

I am twenty-one years of age and have had five years' experience in the office of a large manufacturing concern, during which time I was employed as a stenographer and office clerk.

Although I am still with this concern, I am desirous of making a change and would greatly appreciate the favor of an interview.

I am willing to start in at a salary of $22.

Thanking you for any consideration you may give this letter, I am

Respectfully yours,

5. Point out the good qualities of the following response to a blind advertisement. Make a complete, detailed analysis. Why use the marginal headings?

Age: Twenty-two.

Education: I am a graduate of Winton Academy, Winton, Mass. I am at present working for the B. S. degree at Columbia University.

Experience: From September, 1922, to June, 1924, I was employed as a stenographer in the office of the Secretary, Columbia University. I have been employed since June, 1924, as secretary to Dr. R. G. Raynolds, Secretary of Teachers College.

Knowledge of English: I received a thorough training in grammar and rhetoric at Winton Academy. My senior English essay was chosen among twenty-four to be spoken at the Commencement exercises. I have taken several courses in Business English and Secretarial Correspondence in the Extension Division of Columbia University. In connection with my English courses I have taken two courses in Business Law, in order to acquaint myself with Law terms and forms.

References: I am permitted to refer you to the Secretary of Columbia University, Mr. F. D. Fackenthal, and to Dr. R. G. Raynolds, Secretary of Teachers College.

Why I feel qualified: I feel that I am qualified to fill the position in question, because of my extensive training in letter writing under two of the highest executives connected with Columbia University, because of my varied courses in English, and because of my deep interest in Law.

If my application meets the qualifications you demand for this position, will you grant me an interview and let me know when it is convenient for you to interview me, so that you may judge my personal qualifications?

You can reach me by telephone at any time between nine and twelve, and one and four, by calling Morningside 1400.

Sincerely yours,

Wanted: A young woman with University training to act as Secretary to executive of law firm. Experience desirable; sound knowledge of English and some knowl-

edge of law essential; give full details in letter. T56 Downtown.

6. Why is the following letter incomplete?

Gentlemen:

Age: Twenty-two.

Religion: Protestant Episcopal.

Education: High School graduate.

Experience: Five years' business experience. For the past two years I have been employed as secretary to Mr. R. C. Burney, oil mill engineer of the American Cotton Oil Company, 65 Dearborn Street, Chicago. As Mr. Burney supervised the operations of fourteen Southern plants, he was necessarily absent frequently on inspection trips. During his absences I had charge of the correspondence and the daily production records. This work has familiarized me with engineering and structural terms, and has developed in me the ability to handle work of a detailed nature.

Because of the situation in the cotton seed market, the American Cotton Oil Company is closing down all its crushing mills and releasing all its employees in this branch of its activities.

An interview will substantiate what I have stated.

Sincerely yours,

7. Is this letter too long? Does it give a good picture of the applicant?

Gentlemen:

I am certain that I can make good as correspondent in your Collection Department. I have waded through the process of trial and error in collections. I am, therefore, now able to adopt the desirable methods of collections. I have, further, an understanding of human nature, gained through experience and careful observation.

I hold a high school diploma. My six years of business training comprise the following:

My first position was that of stenographer to the Superintendent of the American Railway Express Company. At the end of two years, I resigned to accept a more attractive proposition—that of stenographer for the Credit Manager of a large merchandise concern. I do not care to disclose the name in this letter because I am still in the employ of this firm. In addition to acting as transcriber in this position, I gradually increased my responsibilities to include those of relieving my superior

of minor details. During the past two years I have attended wholly to the collection duties in the Credit Department. This entails collections through the mails, but at times I have had occasion to interview local customers who call to make arrangements for the payment of their accounts.

I have had experience with the habitual lazy remitter and the man who cannot pay bills promptly. My firm is satisfied with the results obtained. At all times I am mindful of the fact that my concern is desirous of receiving an order together with a check in response to a "please remit" request.

I believe that with your concern I should have greater opportunities than my present position affords me in the collection field, in which I am deeply interested. An interview will, therefore, be appreciated. I know that the success I have had will make me valuable to your firm. If you will grant me an interview, I shall submit references. You can reach me by writing to the address given below.

Yours very truly,

8. Point out the false notes and the wrong point of view in this follow-up letter.

Dear Sir:

Many of the points you brought up at yesterday's interview have given me food for thought.

The more I think about them, the more I am convinced that your company is the one with which I wish to work.

Your program for expansion and the methods you expect to use in so doing, are directly in line with my publishing ideals.

I was also very well impressed with the other members of the company. I am sure we can co-operate to our mutual advantage.

You may be sure that I shall not negotiate with any other companies until after the tenth of the month. By that time I am sure that you will have made the necessary arrangements so that I can give expression to some enthusiasm—with your company.

Thank you again for the pleasant interview and the cordial reception. I feel that this is but the beginning of a very happy and profitable association for all of us.

Very truly yours,

9. Compare the merits of these follow-ups. Can you improve them? Just how?

(1)

Dear Sir:

I want to thank you for the time you so very generously spared me in which to explain to you what I deemed my qualifications for the position in your department.

As I sat in your office I was impressed with the quantity of work passing through your hands. I feel that I now understand the importance of your having a secretary who can relieve you of the major portion of your routine work. My past experience, I believe, has trained me not only to execute commands efficiently but also to anticipate the needs of a busy executive.

If given an opportunity, I should try to be a real help to you. May I have that opportunity?

Respectfully yours,

(2)

Dear Sir:

Thank you for the interview which you granted me this morning.

I feel certain from what you told me about the stenographic work in your office that my four years of experience with my present employer will enable me to give you complete satisfaction. Although, as you said, I have not had experience in the real estate business, I am sure that I can easily and rapidly adapt myself to it.

I assure you that I can fill the position to your complete satisfaction.

Very truly yours,

(3)

Dear Sir:

I want to thank you for the interview granted me this morning, and for your willingness to give my application for the position of Correspondent in your Collection Department your further consideration. I shall respect your decision which, nevertheless, I hope will be favorable.

Yours very truly,

(4)

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your courteous treatment of my application for the position in the credit department of your firm.

As the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company is a leader in its field, I should not like to miss this opportunity to become connected with your department.

I am certain that I can meet the requirements of this position as you described them.

Sincerely yours,

10. Rewrite this follow-up. Make whatever changes and additions seem necessary.

Dear Sir:

I am in receipt of your letter of March 15, stating that you had received my application for the position of Assistant Sales Manager, and that same had been filed for further reference.

I wish to thank you for this attention and hope to hear from you as soon as this position shall be vacant.

Yours very truly,

II. Problems in Writing Letters of Application.

1. Write an unsolicited application for the position you now hold. Attach a copy of the advertisement you would use if you were the employer looking for someone to fill this position.

2. Assume that you have seen a newspaper advertisement of a position you can fill. Write the letter. Attach a copy of the advertisement.

3. Assume that you have been granted an interview and that the employer has asked you to write another letter stating why you desire the position and why you consider that your qualifications fit you for it. Remember that you have met the employer in a personal interview.

4. Assume that you desire a position during the long summer vacation. Choose a position which you are qualified to fill. Write an unsolicited letter.

5. (*a*) Write a brief analysis of two of the following advertisements. Show unmistakably that you are able to grasp and visualize the essential factors constituting the problem suggested by each advertisement. Study the requirements carefully and show that you can meet them intelligently. (*b*) Write the letter of application in response to one advertisement. (*c*) Attach a brief explanation, pointing out how your letter is expected to satisfy the employer.

(1) Wanted: Printing Salesman. One of the largest printing plants in the United States, located in New York City, requires a high-grade sales representative, thoroughly experienced and highly successful, but who desires opportunity for larger accomplishment such as our institution affords. The enlargement of facilities and expansion of field provide the opportunity for a worth-while man. His ability might lie in either of two directions, or possibly partly in each:

> Ability to sell a large volume of printing as such.
> Ability to sell printing by co-operating with customers in the creation and production of printed matter of a high grade that will accomplish their purposes.

Salary and commission. Personal interviews will be granted only to those whose initial letter gives sufficient information to warrant it. V 853 Times Downtown.

(2) Credit Investigator—Young man for outside investigations (later perhaps collections) by large retail establishment located in Grand Central district; experience desirable but not required; good personal appearance essential; at least a high school education; to receive consideration, applicants must state nationality of parents, education, experience, if any, in full, including names of all former employers, and salary expected. Tribune 716.

(3) Correspondent—Young man, an easy writer of smooth, thorough, businesslike letters, capable of handling adjustment matters in accounting department of high grade retail establishment located in the Grand Central district; retail experience desirable but not required; applicants to receive consideration, must state education and experience in full. Tribune 717.

(4) Draftsman—experienced in ornamental iron, capable of laying out and detailing high-class work; permanent position and good salary. Atlas Iron and Steel Company, Detroit, Mich.

(5) Copy writer wanted by Southern agency. Must be able to make up layouts for folders, broadsides, booklets, or newspaper and magazine advertisements, so art department can visualize what is wanted. Need not be an artist. We do not expect a genius for the $300 a month salary offered, but want a man who can eventually occupy the copy director's position and become a permanent, well-paid member of this organization. Applicants should give complete information regarding themselves and send samples of their work. State how soon position could be accepted. Address Box 476, care of *Printers' Ink.*

6. Assume that you have read in the newspaper about the expansion of business contemplated by a firm in your city.

Write a letter of application for a position in the enlarged firm.

7. Assume that you have published the following advertisement. (You may change the kind of work to suit your own qualifications.) Assume that you have received at least one desirable lead. The prospective employer has asked you to state your qualifications fully in a letter. Write the letter. Make it aggressive, in keeping with the tone of the advertisement.

> Somewhere in New York there is a business that needs a keen business man with initiative, vision, and organization experience. To such a concern are offered the services of a real producer—a resourceful, forceful, level-headed executive who can develop business, one who is familiar with every detail of credits, collections, accounting, and especially sales management. He knows how to keep constructive forces moving efficiently. His training meets the requirements of any business. The man is now employed as manager in a large financial corporation. He is 36 years old, married, and a resident of New York for 25 years. Address N. R. Times 144.

8. You have been told by a friend that a large local industrial organization contemplates creating a new position, the holder of which will be correspondence supervisor. Write an unsolicited application showing that you have specialized in modern business English as applied to correspondence. Mention your interest and ability in business English. State your qualifications persuasively, showing your ability to work out and carry on a program of correspondence supervision.

9. Assume that you are about to graduate from a university school of business and that you have specialized in business English, advertising, and typography. The head of your school of business has suggested that you write to Layer and Cox, a direct-mail advertising agency. The salary will be small, but there is an opportunity to grow with the organization. Write, giving qualifications, submitting samples of your work. Some experience is desirable, but not absolutely necessary. Assume that you have worked in advertising agencies during your summer vacations and that you have written direct-mail letters for small stores.

10. Assume that you are about to graduate and that you desire a position as high school teacher. The employment

bureau of your institution has informed you of an opening in a small-town high school in your state. Write a letter to the superintendent of the school system, stating the source of your information and presenting your qualifications. Inclose a photograph and a return envelope. You cannot be interviewed because the distance from the university is too great. In place of asking for an interview, plan your letter so that he will be persuaded to send you an application blank.

11. You are about to complete your third year in a university school of commerce. You have given special attention to courses in business English and advertising. You have been looking for a position which you can fill during the summer and for part of the time each week during term time in your senior year.

The following advertisement has come to your attention:

Young advertising man wanted who is especially trained in planning and executing a mail campaign. Experience not necessary, although desirable. Must be one who is thorough in details and yet capable of handling a direct mail account independently. Applicant may start on part time. Real future for the right man.

This looks like your opportunity. Write a letter that shows your ability to sell your personal service direct by mail.

12. (*a*) As a senior about to graduate from a university school of business you have specialized in banking and finance. Write an unsolicited application to a bank executive who knows you. Present your qualifications. Show him that you desire to enter the employ of his bank. You wish to gain your experience in the bank with which he is connected. Convince him of the sincerity of your desire to enter the employ of this particular bank.

(*b*) You have received an acknowledgment of your application, with the statement that a vacancy will probably occur in June or July, and that you will be considered. It is now May 15. Write a follow-up with the aim of impressing him with your genuine desire to enter the employ of his bank.

(*c*) You have not heard from the bank. It is now June 20. You have an offer from an out-of-town bank. Write a letter to the man who acknowledged your application. Tactfully ask whether they are considering you. You are not worried, but you do not wish to accept the other position if

there is a fair prospect of a vacancy in the near future in this bank. Give careful thought to the phrasing of your letter. Do not make the impression that you are hurrying them or that you are using the offered position as a lever.

13. Assume that you published the following advertisement and that you have a response from a desirable advertising agency. You have been asked to write a complete letter of application, an interview to follow if the letter makes a favorable impression. Write the letter.

Advertising assistant—I want to start from the bottom. Salary no object until I prove my worth. I am young (25). College graduate. Successful business record. Once owned a country newspaper. Now advertising student evenings at Columbia. Highest references. Box 610, *Printers' Ink*.

14. Answer the following advertisement.

Young woman—Position open in small but well-established advertising agency for young woman with experience in general agency routine—bookkeeping, billing, stenography. State experience in detail and give salary required. Box 619, P. I.

Chapter XIV

BUSINESS REPORTS

The report is one of the most widely useful forms of business writing. The student who familiarizes himself with the theory and practice of the common forms of reports should be prepared, when called upon in business, to produce a good report with less effort and more power than a man who has not had the benefit of special training.

The old-fashioned, one-man management of a business is rendered impossible by the size and complexity of modern corporations. Personal contact, even within a single organization, is no longer possible on a scale commensurate with the needs of business. The modern executive, therefore, bases important decisions on documentary evidence in the form of reports from members of the staff and from outside consultants. The growing tendency, moreover, to replace haphazard interpretations of business data by systematic investigations has made imperative the widespread use of business reports.

Modern business reveals a network of reports. In fact, the annual report of a large corporation is the pyramided result of hundreds of reports from officials and departments within the organization. The weekly reports of salesmen and minor officers are compiled to make the monthly reports of subdivisions in the organization. These monthly reports, in turn, form the basis of the department manager's annual report. The annual departmental reports supply material for the president's annual report to the board of directors. This body reports not only to the stockholders, but also to the public, which consists of interested parties like credit men, note holders, and banks dealing in acceptances.

There are, furthermore, to be considered the vast body of reports made by and for the national government, state governments, and municipalities. Both private and public business are in constant need of expert advice from engineers, as

in the case of tunnels, waterways, harbor improvements, highways, and other projects too numerous to mention. Such advice is based on information organized in reports. Innumerable preliminary reports supplied essential data for such great enterprises as the construction of the Panama Canal, and the Pennsylvania terminal in New York. The abatement of the smoke nuisance in Chicago, and the solution of rapid transit problems in Philadelphia, were made possible by investigators who stated their findings in reports that indicated ways and means.

Definition.—A report is a comprehensive statement of verified facts and impersonal conclusions, based on first-hand analysis of present or past conditions and operations, and compiled for the information, with or without recommendations for future action, of executives and controlling groups.

Kinds of reports.—As defined for the purposes of business, there are, broadly, two types of reports: (1) the periodic report; (2) the examination report. Both types are designed to furnish necessary information.

Periodic Reports.

Periodic reports, so called because they are presented at regular intervals, record past operations for the purpose of information and reference. They represent the simplest and most widely used type of business report. They provide information known to the writer but not to the reader. There are two common forms of periodic reports: (1) the record report; (2) the progress report.

Record reports.—Record reports are concerned with the activities of a stated period. The raw material of longer reports is provided by small-scale records submitted *daily* by minor officials—policemen, health officers, truancy officers, time clerks, payroll clerks, conductors, machine operators, power-house operators, foremen, and many others too numerous to mention here. The *weekly* reports of traveling salesmen, subsidiary-agency managers, crew managers, and the like, contain the raw material for longer record reports. Examples of these are the *monthly* reports of department and plant managers. The *annual* report of the president is itself in large part a record report. To insure accurate and adequate

recording of essential data concerning past activities, the short routine reports submitted at brief intervals by subordinates are usually made on printed forms standardized within a given business organization.

The aim of the record report is historical. In its short form, as illustrated in daily, weekly, and monthly reports, it merely records essential data. In the longer forms, the department head reviews, in summary form, the activities of the period elapsed since the last report was submitted.

The following excerpts illustrate the characteristic contents and style of record reports.

1. At the beginning of the fiscal year there were 4,241 employees in the bureau service. During the year 466 new appointments were made, 26 employees were transferred from other bureaus or departments, and 46 former employees were reinstated, making 538 additions to bureau forces. During the same period 582 employees were separated from the service: 230 by resignation, 24 by death, 25 by transfer to other branches of the Federal service, 7 by removal for cause, and 6 by retirement under the provisions of the act of May 22, 1920, while other separations numbered 290. At the close of the fiscal year the bureau rolls contained 4,197 names, a decrease of 44 for the year. (Observe the ease with which the reader of this Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Animal Husbandry follows the divisions of the data on Personnel. Each division is clearly marked by an obviously appropriate introductory phrase.)

2. During the year 1924 there was connected a total of 2,308,000 stations, and 1,564,000 were disconnected. The total net gain in Bell-owned telephones for the year was 836,163. This gain, together with a desirable restoration in plant margins, has required a construction program substantially larger than that of any preceding year. As a result of the execution of this program, there has been a marked reduction in the number of telephone orders awaiting installation. The System is nearing the condition which generally existed prior to the war, in that, with few exceptions, new telephones desired may be promptly provided within the limits of settled areas. (This excerpt from the Annual Report (1925) of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company illustrates how comment is used to illuminate otherwise dry figures. The report is that of the directors to the stockholders, who welcome explanatory matter.)

3. The report need not always cover a year or a fraction of a year, as the following Introduction to the Report of the Director of the States Relations Service indicates:

With the end of the current fiscal year, June 30, 1923, the States Relations Service will cease to exist and its several offices will have new relations to the organization of the Department of Agriculture. It, therefore, seems fitting that this final report of the Director of the States Relations Service should contain a brief history of the work which has been under his direction for the past 30 years, together with reference to earlier matters which led to the inauguration of this work.

4. This report contains a survey of the written work in English eB6 (Business Writing) during the first half of the semester (February 6 to March 28) by Waldo Gellard. (This is a typical brief introduction for a short report.)

Progress reports.—Progress reports are submitted either regularly at stated intervals, or only by special request. As a matter of practice, the long annual reports of corporations very often fuse the progress and record reports accumulated during the year. The progress report differs from the record report in purpose. Unlike the record report, which serves as a chronicle of business activities, with or without explanatory comment, the progress report establishes comparisons.

From time to time those in charge of public or private enterprises desire to know what has been accomplished, for example, in the collection department, the sales department, the purchasing department, etc., in comparison with accomplishments during previous administrative periods. Thus the present status of collections as compared with the status at the same time last year is made clear in the progress report. The data used in the progress report are compiled from record reports.

The progress report may compare the latest record with records at the same periods since the inception of the business or enterprise. It may make a comparison with the period immediately preceding. In a report on the construction of a factory building or on the installation of more modern machinery or more efficient methods of production, the progress during the past month may be compared merely with the progress during the preceding month or with that during every month since the work was begun.

Statistical reports.—The executive of a concern is presumably a busy man who must have a knowledge of a good many departments in the concern. He must, therefore, have the

material for any one department presented to him in a way that will give him, in the smallest space, the true picture of that department. He is ordinarily not interested in all the mechanisms of that department. He wants to see the results set down in comparable fashion, so that he can understand the material with little or no study. Thus, for example, if the credit man is making a report, he must make that report to the executive in a way that is readily intelligible to him. The following is an example of a report on collections.

REPORT ON COLLECTIONS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY, 1925
(From Mr. R. V. Waite.)

	Accounts Outstanding	*Accounts Past Due*	*Percentage of Accounts Past Due*
February, 1925	$200,000	$40,000	20
February, 1924	220,000	50,000	22.7
January, 1925	210,000	45,000	21.9

These figures will give the executive at a glance the actual amounts in dollars. What is more important, the report will give him the actual figures in percentages, for unless the credit man and the executive can think in terms of percentages, they are liable to gain a false picture of the trend of their business. For example, in the percentages given above, an increase, in accounts past due in January, 1925, of $5,000 would more than offset the increase in the amounts outstanding, and the percentage of past due was, therefore, higher than in February, 1925.

Interpreting statistics.—Though this report is, from certain points of view, completely adequate to the business executive who thinks quickly in terms of figures, it may not be adequate to the executive who does not handle figures easily. For such an executive a few words of explanation are often necessary, even of these self-explanatory figures. That is to say, either as a preface or as a conclusion to the figures, the credit man might very well state, "Our collections for February, 1925, have shown an improvement over the collections of February, 1924. The past dues for February, 1924, were 22.7 per cent. They were reduced in February, 1925, to 20 per cent."

Further explanations may sometimes be necessary. The reasons for the respective increases or decreases in past dues

should be given by the credit man, who ought to be the best informed man on this subject. He ought to be able to state whether that decrease is due to the improvement in general business or to closer collections; or whether the increase is due to poorer business conditions throughout the country or in certain sections; or whether it is possibly due to the fact that one large account of a concern that is now undergoing an extension has become past due. The business executive is entitled to know the exact status of collections, and that means not only the present status but also the antecedent reasons for that status, for it is only with this material that he is enabled to project the future of the business and to coördinate the production, purchasing, sales, and credit departments.

The following excerpts show how tabulated material is interpreted, so that the statistics may appear in their true relations to the problem as a whole.

1. The first comprehensive attempt to estimate the numbers of people using the national forests for recreation was made in 1916, when an estimated total of 2,370,000 persons was reported. Recent verifications of succeeding estimates yield the following figures:

Year	*Visitors*	*Year*	*Visitors*
1917.....	3,160,300	1920.....	4,832,671
1918.....	3,322,565	1921.....	5,433,420
1919.....	3,964,344	1922.....	6,172,942

Thus in six years the estimated number of visitors virtually doubled, and all indications point to a continued increase for years to come. (Report of the Forester, 1923.)

2. The number of telephone calls, both local and toll, which the System was called upon to handle in 1924 was substantially in excess of that of any previous year, notwithstanding the fact that the general business activity was relatively less in 1924 than in 1923. The average daily exchange and toll connections in 1924, over 45,000,000, were 7.1 per cent in excess of those in 1923. (This is interesting, because it incorporates both the percentage statement and the statement of general business conditions, focusing these on the main item of the paragraph in such a way that the most obtuse reader understands.)

3. (After a page of tabulated data that make up the Bell System Income Statement, a series of short paragraphs explains the various items. Observe how percentages and comparisons are used in the paragraph on the Traffic Expense item)—Traffic expenses, representing the largest of the several groups of expenses, increased approximately

$7,000,000, or about 4.0 per cent over 1923, as compared with an increase of 7.1 per cent in the number of calls handled.

Letter reports.—When the periodic report is wholly, or almost wholly, statistical, the text elucidating the report is often put into the form of an ordinary business letter. The purpose of the following letter report by the sales manager is to cover the outstanding points of the statistical report (not reproduced), stressing the points he wishes to impress upon his chief.

Mr. George J. Eckersen, President,
The U. S. Magnifying Company,
Perth Amboy, N. J.

Dear Sir:

In connection with this report I am submitting a tabulated statement of the total number of Magnifyo loudspeakers sold during the year ending December 31, 1924.

The tabulation has been compiled to indicate the annual sales of the company since its incorporation three years ago.

The table shows that our sales during 1924 increased twenty per cent over those of the preceding year, 1923.

We are finding competition very keen. Two new loudspeakers have been put on the market during 1924, one of which resembles ours in cost and efficiency.

We now have fourteen salesmen traveling exclusively for the company—two more than a year ago.

Our policy of maintaining agencies in strategic centers has been a strong factor in the increase of sales. These distributing centers enable dealers who carry a small line of loudspeakers to replenish their stock overnight. We have definitely traced several profitable accounts to the satisfactory service made possible by our distributing agencies.

In conclusion permit me to suggest that the volume of our sales can be increased profitably by marketing a Junior Magnifyo that is as efficient for its size as the Magnifyo, but lower in cost. Our salesmen report a lively market for a smaller loudspeaker at a lower price.

Respectfully submitted,

John R. Seller,
Sales Manager.

Examination Reports.

The examination report analyzes present and past conditions or activities for the purpose of determining future action. Its purpose is not to record known data but to report the solution of a problem or give the results of first-hand study. The investigation leading to the formulation of definite and accurate conclusions and, when requested, to recommendations based on these conclusions, differentiates the examination report from the periodic report.

The investigation involves two essential steps: (1) the collection of all relevant but not previously known data; (2) the analysis of these assembled data with the object of coming to definite conclusions. A third step is essential when the employer has specified the inclusion of recommendations dealing with special applications of these conclusions to the employer's business or project. Such recommendations, however, are customarily included only when the man who is conducting the examination is an expert.

The range of examination reports is as wide as business and industry. The investigation, for example, may involve library work; consultation of office records and files; a first-hand study of office, plant, or agency conditions and organization; a survey, with samplings and tests, of a riverbed for bridges, tunnels, and the like, or of a valley or stretch of countryside for a railroad or highway; a thorough study of markets for a certain product in a selected city, state, or region.

The purpose of the examination reports may be to determine whether available markets warrant a large outlay for advertising; whether a bridge at a certain point would best serve the needs of the community; whether a reconstitution of departmental activities in an automobile plant would lead to greater efficiency in production; whether the earning capacity of an industrial enterprise justifies the flotation of a bond issue by investment bankers. On a smaller scale, the investigation may aim to determine the advisability of a change in the filing system; a modification of office procedure in the dictation of business letters; changes in the printed form of routine reports; the installation of a cafeteria in the local high school; the formulation of a plan for changing the design of an automobile.

Essential steps in preparing the examination report.—The maker of the report fixes upon the methods to be used in the investigation, but he cannot do so until the employer has thoroughly informed him of the purpose of the investigation. This is done by means of personal conferences, correspondence, and, finally, a written agreement that establishes the specific aim of the investigation. The scope of the investigation is, however, determined by the investigator. The limits within which the investigation is to be carried on are discussed in the preliminary survey, which constitutes the first step in the preparation of the report. The final examination is the second step; analysis of data, the third; organization of data, the fourth; writing the report, the fifth; and the layout, the sixth and last step.

1. *Preliminary survey.*—The preliminary survey is a cursory but not careless examination revealing the kind and amount of material available. It clarifies the writer's ideas to the extent that he can define and limit his subject and fix the scope of the examination. It enables him, furthermore, to find tentative divisions for the outline. If, finally, the material warrants the expenditure of further effort, he formulates a plan of procedure.

2. *Final examination.*—The final examination is thorough and, in fact, exhaustive. All available material is carefully scrutinized so that essential data may not be overlooked. In the course of the final examination, the headings of the tentative outline are modified and corrected in accordance with the needs of the fully revealed data.

The material should be gathered on cards of uniform size. Only one item should be entered on each card. If the examination involves library work, the exact title and page reference should be noted on each card, so that, if verification is necessary at the time of writing, reference to the original passage can be made without loss of time.

The card system of note taking and memoranda recording is modern and economical. It saves time, because it eliminates the necessity of copying and recopying notes at the time the collected material is organized.

3. *Analysis of data.*—The process of sifting the collected material is simplified by use of the card system. Three groups of cards emerge from the analysis. The first group contains

those items that are unmistakably relevant; the second, those which are closely related to the main issue; the third, those items which upon final scrutiny are found not to be useful.

In the course of a thoroughgoing examination, notation is made of many negligible details. Rigid analysis separates the essential from the non-essential data, those in the third group not being retained, because they are too remote to be included in a compact report.

The second group should be retained, to be drawn upon in case amplification becomes desirable. Thus the second group constitutes a reserve fund.

The first group contains all significant facts, ideas, data, and illustrations essential to clearness and accuracy. This group represents the material of primary importance.

4. *Organization of data.*—To establish the final outline, the material of primary importance is grouped according to the main headings and subheadings of the report. Where necessary, new cards containing notations of these headings are inserted in proper places, the cards that carry the data having been assembled in the desired order. Each heading is now given a number or letter to identify its place in the outline.

5. *Writing the report.*—If the preceding steps have been conscientiously followed, the essential steps in the process of prevision are completed. The material now lies before the writer completely assembled, and arranged according to an orderly plan. By observing the simple mechanics of the card system, the writer has reduced clerical work to a minimum, thus leaving his mind fresh for the final act of writing. With the material before him, his mind is now free for the problem of finding suitable words and phrases. By following the lead of his carefully ordered cards he constructs sentences and weaves these into paragraphs.

After a thorough revision, to make certain that he has observed the essential qualities of business writing, the report is ready for the layout.

An outline of a trade report.—The following outline of a trade report suggests the kind of material used in an examination report covering a problem faced by advertising agencies and publishers making reliable investigations for their clients. (The layout of the report will be discussed in a later section.)

REPORT ON THE HOTEL MARKET FOR DAMON FABRICATED WASTEBASKETS

Introduction:

I. Authorized by the President of the Damon Fabricated Wastebasket Company.

II. Purpose: to determine (1) the size of the hotel market for Damon Fabricated Wastebaskets, and (2) the adaptability of the product to the hotel market.

III. Sources of information. The research department of the Mintner Publishing Company made use of:

- A. Standard works on hotel management.
- B. Publications devoted to hotel management.
- C. Accumulated data on file.
- D. Special personal investigation in eight widely separated and typical cities throughout the United States: Boston, New York, Atlanta, Miami, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Atlantic City.

The report proper:

I. Size of the hotel industry.

- A. Total number of hotels with more than 25 rooms.
- B. Total number of rooms in these hotels.
- C. Average increase in rooms each year, 1921-1924.

II. Causes of increase in hotel living.

III. Effect of increased patronage on hotel furnishings.

- A. New hotels attractively furnished.
- B. Old hotels remodeled, redecorated, refurnished.

IV. The Wastebasket item in room equipment.

- A. Conditions governing the use of wastebaskets prior to 1921.
- B. Present trend to harmonize wastebasket with room furnishings.
- C. Fire hazard important.

V. Hotel market for wastebaskets.

- A. Depreciation on—
  1. Metal wastebaskets.
  2. Paper wastebaskets.
  3. Fabricated wastebaskets.
  4. Total depreciation on all styles.
- B. Annual replacement business.
- C. Annual new hotel market.
- D. Total new and replacement volume.

VI. Whom to reach in selling to hotels.
  A. Manager.
  B. Housekeeper.
  C. Purchasing agent for chain operated hotel systems.
  D. Manager's wife.

VII. How advertising reaches the hotel market.
  A. Advertising in "Hotel Efficiency."
    1. Sample basket in standard finish.
      a. Free.
      b. Nominal cost to cover shipping.
    2. Orders accepted.
      a. Direct.
      b. Through hotel supply house.
      c. Local stores: department, furniture, hardware, etc.
  B. Following up inquiries.
    1. Letter.
    2. Booklet in color, showing three standard finishes.
    3. Special finishes—possibilities, cost, etc.
  C. Mailing lists.
    1. "Hotel Efficiency" offers list of 1000 hotels as cross section of industry.
    2. Lists of managers, purchasing agents, etc.
    3. Selected hotel supply houses.
    4. Summer hotels in May.
    5. Winter hotels in November.
    6. Additional hotels.

VIII. Sales work.
  A. Regular salesmen direct to hotels by—
    1. Traveling salesman.
    2. Local salesman.
  B. Regular salesmen working on supply houses.
    1. Follow-up on mailing campaign.
    2. Regular sales work.
  C. Special sales work on selected lists, to build representative list of—
    1. Hotel sales.
    2. Supply house sales.

Conclusion:
  A. Damon Fabricated Company in position to cater to desire for better hotel furnishings.
  B. Damon Fabricated Baskets now being made in sufficient variety of finishes to harmonize with the most popular furniture.

C. Damon Fabricated Baskets can be decorated on special order to harmonize with decorated furniture.
D. Damon Fabricated Company can sell 100 baskets to average hotel but only 4 to 6 baskets to average business office.
E. Radiating influence of hotels on general consumer business.
    1. Eighty-eight million registered guests annually.
    2. Reached better through hotel demonstration than through printed media.

Qualities of the report.—The ideals of *clearness* and *interest* should be kept fully in view. Interest is secondary, although not negligible, in all reports except those intended for the general public; as, for example, in the widely discussed Philadelphia "Plain Talk" report, which was written to make a popular appeal to citizens and taxpayers. Certain reports issued by state agricultural colleges and by home economics departments in state institutions are so planned, phrased, and illustrated as to assume a popular appeal. In such reports, interest is fully as important as clearness.

Certain government reports are made so interesting through use of illustrations and adaptation in language that the atmosphere is like that of the special article. The conscious and successful striving for interest in addition to accuracy is well illustrated in the publications of the Forestry Department of the United States Government.

The fundamental qualities of business writing are observed in business reports.

Correctness in the language and layout of the report reduces to a minimum the obstacles in the way of the reader.

Construction is indispensable in writing, the chief aim of which is clearness and accuracy. The standardized form of the long report is so important as to demand separate treatment in a later section of this chapter.

Compactness, in its true sense of completeness with brevity, is an outstanding quality of report writing.

Consideration of the reader determines, to an appreciable extent, the kind of language employed. The writer must gauge the equipment of his reader. Is he a man of affairs, or is he a trained specialist?

When addressing specialists, and when no consideration

need be given to general readers or executives who are unfamiliar with special or group terminology, the writer can most clearly and economically present his report in the nomenclature sanctioned by the usage of the group addressed. Thus a firm of consulting engineers, in making a report to the chief of the plant under investigation, is free to use engineering terms.

When, on the other hand, a report is directed to men of affairs, adjustment is necessary in the choice of diction. Even here, however, accuracy need not be sacrificed. When addressing untechnical readers, it is customary to put at the head of the report definitions of unavoidable technical terms.

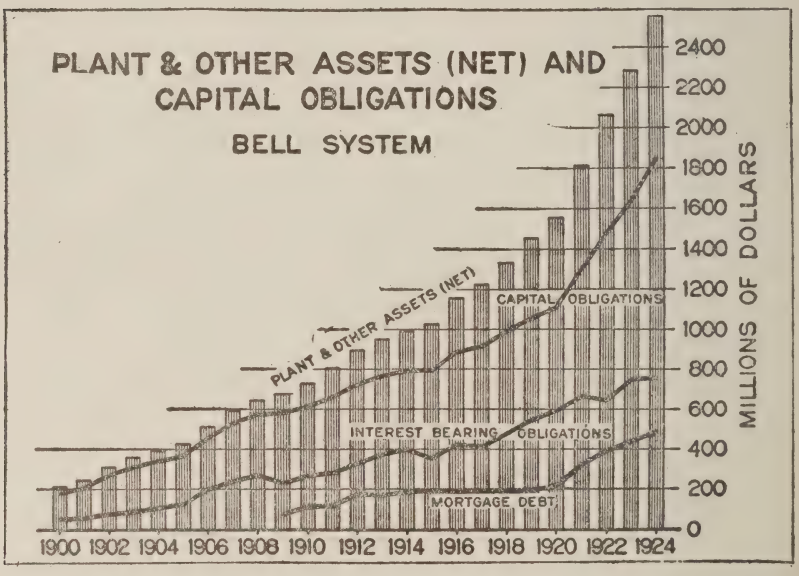
Consideration of the reader is manifested, furthermore, in the so-called *double report.* This is a consolidated report made up of two parts, the first directed to the general reader, the second, to experts. Examples are found among municipal reports. In the process of preparing the double report, detailed technical reports of subordinates are compiled by a superior officer and adapted by him in popular diction for the general reader. The second part of the report is then compiled for the perusal of experts. Adaptation is manifest in the plan worked out for the general practice of the Westinghouse Engineering Department. In this plan the report is submitted in two parts. The "Short Report" (not more than three double-spaced typewritten pages) is intended for those who are not familiar with the work and whose time is limited, as, for example, executives or commercial organizations for whom the Westinghouse Company is doing engineering work. The material is general, including only the essential features, and the language is simple. The "Detailed Report," as the name indicates, is technical and exhaustive.

Concreteness is secured by specific words and phrases in the text, and by the mechanical aid of graphs, charts, diagrams, appendices, etc., that help the reader visualize the text.

Reports to stockholders can be made concrete if illuminating explanatory paragraphs are used in connection with graphs, tabulations, and other visualizing devices. Accuracy need not be sacrificed in the attempt to put a clear picture before the reader. The commonest device for picturing expenditures is the pie-chart, made familiar in the advertising of the meat industry. Few untrained readers can find their way intelli-

gently through a page of statistical matter representing, for instance, the balance sheets of a large corporation for 1923 and 1924. The statement of Plant and Other Assets (Net) and Capital Obligations of the Bell System would be equally confusing except in some such form as that given below.

The following chart shows the growth of the investment in the Bell System since 1900, compared with the increase since that date in capital obligations of the System outstanding in the hands of the public:



The relations between the assets and the outstanding securities, as shown on this chart, reflect the conservative policy under which the growth of the business has been financed. On December 31, 1924, the total mortgage debt of the System was less than $481,000,000 and the total funded debt was about $753,000,000, while assets, after deducting current liabilities, were in excess of $2,549,000,000. Stated in terms of percentage relationship, mortgage debt was less than 19 per cent and total funded debt was less than 30 per cent of such assets.

Cheerfulness, as a revelation of *character,* is not to be ignored, although the tone and temper of the ideal report is impersonal. Short record reports offer least scope for character. Progress reports, however, afford special opportunities

not overlooked by the alert writer. The same holds true of examination reports. When the situation warrants optimism, the maker of the report is deficient in the art of composition if he cannot brighten his paragraphs here and there as circumstances suggest. Professor Ray Palmer Baker, authority on engineering reports, has well said that the writer of a report is under no obligation to be dull, monotonous, or pedestrian. The Report of the Forester (U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1923) contains a good illustration of cheerfulness. On the basis of the tabulated statistics alone, the delinquent grazing fees of stockmen using the national forests appear to the general reader to show a depressingly large total of delinquent permittees. The writer of the report has, however, interpreted these figures in their true perspective against the total grazing receipts, and has, furthermore, accounted for the percentage of unpaid fees by convincing reference to unfortunate conditions beyond the control of the stockmen.

> It is gratifying to observe that the total delinquency for these two years of privation and hardship among cattlemen is less than 2 per cent of the grazing receipts for these years. Probably a portion of this will have to be dropped from further consideration as uncollectible, the majority of the delinquent owners having been forced to dispose of their live stock and go out of business. Considering the wide distress among live stock owners during these years, this showing is better than was to be expected.

Qualifications of the report writer.—The writer of a report must, first of all, have a full command of the facts constituting the material of the report. He must be thoroughly informed in the field covered. His information, furthermore, must be accurate. If it is not, his report will not be reliable. Completeness and accuracy are basic requirements.

The maker of the report must, secondly, know how to present his material. Extensive knowledge is of little use to the man whose mind is not trained to sound analysis of accumulated data. Clear thinking and sound judgment in the selection and arrangement of material are prerequisites to success. He must be able to distinguish sharply between relevant and unimportant details. He must grasp firmly the significant elements of an investigation, and marshal data that focus unmistakably on these elements. If he is to determine, for ex-

ample, whether it is advisable to dismantle a large coal trestle and construct a new one, or to repair the old trestle, he is not expected to submit a bulky document inventorying the whole doomed structure, even to individual rusty rivets and decayed timbers. In place of such a tedious, and, in effect, confusing report, the man of keen insight and sound judgment includes carefully selected representative details justifying his conclusions.

The *point of view* of the report writer is scientific. Because the object of the investigation is an unbiased report, the impersonal attitude is indispensable. The position of the writer is that of an unprejudiced, impartial observer and recorder. Some investigating agencies conceal the name of the client so that the investigator may not be influenced in any way.

Not less than fifty per cent of the effectiveness of the report depends upon the manner in which it is written and displayed. The resources and devices of rhetoric are at the writer's command. It is his duty to use them when they assist him in presenting his material effectively. Observe how skillfully the report on the fabricated wastebaskets leaves in the mind of the manufacturer the impression that the cultivation of the hotel market will result in increased sales to consumers in the home and in business. Observe also how deftly the writer of the following closing paragraph of a 56-page government report has shaped his material to bring out a significant point at the close. Observe how he has constructed the third sentence from the close so as to stress the thought contained in the "if" clause. Sentence length has much to do with the pleasant persuasiveness of this paragraph, which brings the whole report to a significant close.

The interest of the forest personnel in fire prevention through education has reached the point where a demand is coming from the men for material that they can use in talks before schools, small meetings, commercial and civic bodies, and the like. Lantern and motion-picture equipment is being asked for from the field at a rate decidedly beyond the capacity of the service to supply. Indeed, there are almost unlimited possibilities for the use of educational material, through all sorts of agencies, if an adequate supply were available. The educational work of the service should be much more amply provided for than it ever has been. It is capable of making very great returns on the outlay.

Sources of information.— The investigation leading to the writing of a report may require the tapping of one or more of the following sources of information. In connection with complex problems the experienced investigator makes use, first, of printed sources. This is called library work. Then he has recourse, if necessary, to direct observation. This is called field work.

1. Where personal investigation based on direct observation is necessary, as for a marketing report, field work is indispensable. This may be extensive or limited, according to the needs of the problem.

If the problem is limited, it may be possible to make an adequate personal survey in one day. On the other hand, the survey may involve the work of many subordinates whose labors extend over a period of several weeks, as for a marketing report to be used as a basis for a national advertising campaign.

2. Printed sources are found in private and public libraries. (*a*) General reference works, like encyclopedias, are consulted first. (*b*) The leads given by these are followed up in the card catalogue, and then in indexes, guides, and check lists. An example of the index is the "A. L. A. Index to General Literature"; of the guides, "The Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature"; of the check lists, "The Checklist of United States Public Documents (1789-1909)." (*c*) Special libraries and the catalogues of these are indispensable for the investigator in special fields: "The Statistical Abstract of the United States" for data on manufacturing, transportation, engineering, etc.; the "Manual of Statistics (1879-1921)" for investigators and dealers in securities. The extent of specialization in business and industrial literature was evident at a dinner for special librarians (1924), which was attended by nearly two hundred workers in this field. Organizations like those of the National Association of Credit Men can supply complete, accurate, and up-to-date data on special problems.

The experienced report writer saves himself much needless effort if he uses the printed or tabulated results of previous investigators in his field.

3. Material is collected by means of correspondence, interviews, and questionnaires. (*a*) The ability to write successful

letters of inquiry is a useful asset in eliciting desirable information. Thus, an advertising manager whose enlarged appropriation is refused until he can submit facts that prove the necessity of continued large-scale efforts in national advertising, writes to manufacturers for data on their experiences with reduced-scale national advertising in its relation to earnings. (See Chapter IX for Letters of Inquiry.) (*b*) The ability to elicit necessary information in the course of personal interviews is an asset. (*c*) Questionnaires are a fruitful source of information for the writer of business reports as well as for statisticians and other investigators. The questionnaire as a means of securing information is so important and so widely used that separate consideration is given to it in the following paragraphs.

The questionnaire as a source of information.—The value of the information that comes as a result of questionnaires depends upon a great many factors. If the investigation is an exhaustive one in some particular field, the problem of approach is naturally quite different from that of the ordinary type of investigation that business men are likely to use. In an investigation of the exhaustive scientific kind, elaborate forms can be devised, a large amount of money can be expended, and every effort can be made to insure getting adequate data. For such an investigation, however, statisticians, engineers, or accountants are ordinarily necessary. Such investigations, therefore, are not considered here. They are of interest to experts only.

Business men, however, are finding the questionnaire a valuable source of information for the acquisition of valuable information in the course of their business, whether that relates to the internal operation of the business or to specific phases of marketing, credits, etc.

For such investigations several things must be borne in mind: (1) The questionnaire must be simply devised. Every care must be taken to eliminate the possibility of ambiguous answers. The answers must be susceptible of quick classification and computation. (2) The questionnaire must be directed to take care of the typical case rather than the unusual. Too many questionnaires fail of their purpose because they attempt to get too much material from those who are unable, or reluc-

tant, to supply it, whether their reluctance comes from want of time, interest, or what not.

If the questionnaire attempts to get definite facts in the form of certain figures, the problem is simple, provided the desired facts are facts that the questionnaired can give. A large number of questionnaires, however, naturally enter into the field of opinion. In these cases the questions must be all the more exact, must permit only of certain answers, and the type of answer permitted must be designated. The questionnaired must answer definitely, "yes" or "no," or choose between "better," "the same as," or "poorer," instead of giving, as otherwise he would be tempted to give, his own opinion in his own way. It is obviously impossible for those who receive the answered questionnaire, without vast expenditure of time and without introducing some prejudices of their own, to shade the opinions in such a way as to put them into classifications which they devise for the purpose.

If, for example, the investigator is interested in present business conditions, it is futile for him to attempt to get information on this subject by asking one hundred different men the question, "How is business?" The answers will come back "rotten," "good," "fair," "poor," "fairly good," "as good as could be expected," "excellent," "wonderful," etc. No one, of course, can classify answers like these.

The investigator who is making an investigation of this kind and cannot get the percentages of business—that is, whether business is 10 per cent better or 15 per cent poorer—can devise his questionnaire in a way to elicit fairly satisfactory returns by asking the following question:

Were your sales for August, 1925, as compared with your sales for August, 1924, larger.....
equal to.....
smaller .....

The question so put is not ambiguous, and the information obtained from it is quickly calculable.

Men who are making an investigation of this kind for the first time will frequently attempt to save space by asking the following questions:

Were your sales for August, 1925, larger or smaller than your sales for August, 1924?

The answers are likely to come back in impossible forms. In the first place, sales might be practically equal. There is no provision for "equal to." In the second place, some of the readers will make marks of their own which are unintelligible. They may answer the question as "yes" and forget to cross out the portion to which the "yes" does not refer.

If, for example, the executive head of a concern wants to know how collections are from his various credit departments in the different districts, his questionnaire should not be, "How are collections this year?" The question will vary with the type of organization and the possibility of getting the answers. "What is the percentage of past-dues to outstanding accounts (or monthly sales) in February, 1925, as compared with February, 1924?" "What is the percentage of past-dues to outstanding accounts (or monthly sales) for February as compared with February of the preceding year?" If his credit men are equipped to get more exhaustive information, he could ask them what percentage of past-due accounts for February are: 1 to 30 days past due; 30 to 60 days past due; 90 to 120 days past due; and 120 days and over past due. The same procedure applies to the questionnaire sent out to agencies by the sales manager who is collecting material for a progress report on sales.

It is always advisable to have a questionnaire form to fill out. If the questionnaired are under no particular obligation to answer your questions, they will do so all the more readily if they have a form provided. They may need, in addition, a letter telling them the purpose of the questionnaire. That letter will serve the purpose of arousing their interest and making them devote some time to an intelligent answer.

The following letter illustrates how one large life insurance company explained the significance of its questionnaire.

Dear Sir:

We are investigating certain conditions which we believe exist in the teaching profession. In order that we may intelligently complete our analysis, it is necessary that we secure some additional information.

With this objective in mind we have prepared a questionnaire, a copy of which is inclosed. I earnestly invite your coöperation.

A few of the questions may possibly appear to be so personal that you may not feel justified in answering them. Won't you please, however, reply to as many of them as you feel free to answer, and return the questionnaire to me in the inclosed envelope, for without your personal assistance our investigation must fail.

I shall furnish you in due course with a résumé of our findings and meanwhile confidently anticipate your early reply.

Very truly yours,

Observe how explicit the directions are in the following set of instructions from a bureau of research making an investigation of reading habits.

Dear Sir:

When looking over the theater advertisements in New York to select the play you wish to see, what newspapers do you generally consult—evening, morning, Sunday?

Please mark the accompanying card according to the order in which you use them—1, 2, 3.

After marking, please drop the stamped card into a mail box.

If you prefer, you need not sign it.

Very truly yours,

The stamped card contained the following sentences:

In looking up New York theater advertisements I generally consult the newspapers in the order indicated below:
(Please enter the figures 1, 2, 3 to indicate the order of your use of different issues.)

Morning paper .....
Sunday paper .....
Evening paper .....

The layout of an examination report.—Seven units make up the layout, or mechanical display, of the complete examination report: (1) title page; (2) letter of transmittal (authorization); (3) table of contents; (4) synopsis; (5) text; (6) appendix; (7) index. These units are grouped in

three main divisions: (I) prefatory matter (1, 2, 3, 4); (II) text matter (5); (III) supplementary matter (6, 7).

Attention to display is well worth the writer's time, because a report characterized by good appearance has a better chance of being read than one hurriedly thrown together. White spaces should be generous. They relieve the eye and serve to call attention to significant divisions in the contents of the report. The writer must determine whether single spacing or double spacing best serves his purpose. Double spacing is easier to read, but when the report contains many tabulations and illustrations (charts, etc.), single spacing keeps the explanatory matter on the same page as the material it elucidates. The margin at the bottom should be slightly larger than the margin at the top, to keep the page from looking topheavy. The left margin should always be generous, especially when marginal headings are used and when the report is opened like a book. Even when the staples are, after the legal fashion, at the top, the left margin should be wider than the right.

1. *The title page.*—The title page contains the statement of the subject in full, the persons, or company to whom the report is directed, the writer of the report, the date on which it is submitted. As employed in manuscript form, the title page appears as follows:

Report Upon
Effective Opening Paragraphs
In
Adjustment Letters

Made For
English eB6—Business Writing

By
Stuart M. Stanley
April 20, 1925

2. *The letter of transmittal.*—The letter of transmittal appears on the sheet following the title page. In government reports it is a brief formal note from the writer to the official to whom the report is submitted. It contains an identification of the report.

U. S. Department of Agriculture,
Office of the Librarian,
Washington, D. C.,
September 9, 1922.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit the executive report of the library for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1922.

Respectfully yours,
CLARIBEL R. BARNETT,
Librarian.

Hon. Henry C. Wallace,
Secretary of Agriculture.

Trade reports are preceded, as a rule, by a statement of authorization.

The Allen Shoe Company,
215 West 58 Street,
New York, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

On February 12, the writer was requested to collect all the information he could on "Increasing the Efficiency of the Purchasing Department of the Allen Shoe Company."

The material of this report was gathered from Hamilton's "Introduction to Shoe Store Management" and from personal observation in the store of Allen & Company and in three large shoe-trade centers.

The writer believes this report will be of service to you in reorganizing your purchasing department.

The undersigned will be glad to discuss the report with you in a personal interview.

Respectfully yours,
OLGA GAZARIAN.

Dear Sir:

The following report on the progress and improvement in daily written assignments for Business English eB6 was prepared at your request as the assignment for April 7, 1925.

The report is based on the letters written by me from February 13, 1925, to March 20, 1925, inclusive.

Sincerely yours,
EARLE M. CASS.

3. *The table of contents.*—The table of contents follows the letter of transmittal. Its purpose is to give the reader a comprehensive idea of the headings followed in the development of the report. The value of display is obvious in the arrangement of the main headings and subheadings of the outline on page 436. The main headings appear flush with the left margin. The subheadings are indented so that the offset helps the reader to visualize the logical relation of headings in true perspective. Such display helps the reader to concentrate on the main divisions.

4. *The synopsis.*—The synopsis goes by various names, such as "Introduction," "Summary," "Abstract," "History." Whatever its name, it brings to a close the work of introducing the text of the report.

The synopsis is prepared after the text has been completed. It begins on the sheet following the table of contents, or, if this is short, on the same sheet immediately below the table of contents. In long reports it may extend to more than one page. Because it states the essence of the report, the synopsis should be kept as short as the length of the report permits.

5. *The text.*—The text contains the report proper. It develops the headings stated in the table of contents.

Display is important in aiding the reader to find his way comfortably. Connections are not established by means of phrasing so much as by headings in the margin or, in printed reports, between paragraphs. Long paragraphs are uninviting, especially when the material is as substantial as it should be in a reliable report.

Some reports give a running marginal comment, after the manner familiar to students of Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner."

6. *The appendix.*—The appendix is a supplement containing tables, diagrams, charts, maps, computations, bibliographies, etc. The headings in the appendix are indicated by capital letters. When tabulations are extensive, and, therefore, cannot conveniently be placed in the text, they should appear in the appendix.

7. *The index.*—The index is never required with letter reports. If the table of contents of a short report has been carefully constructed, an index is not needed. Long reports,

however, demand an index of all important ideas and thoughts in the text. The index is not prepared until the final typed copy is complete. In case the report is printed, the index is prepared from the final page proof. As the index of a report is exactly like that of a book, consult the index of this book for the layout of the index. In an elaborate report, cross reference may be desirable.

Exercises in Preparing and Writing Reports.

1. Submit a letter report of not more than two typed pages on one of the following problems, or on a similar approved problem. Address the report to your instructor.

(*a*) The tobacco used by an acquaintance (within or without the college) in the course of a week.—Consider the amount, brands, kinds (pipe, cigar, cigarette), times of day, reason for smoking, etc.

(*b*) The system of final examinations used in one of the colleges of your university.—Consider the number, length, distribution, supervision, method of submitting questions (on blackboard, printed, mimeographed, dictated), grading, value of the examination in making up the term grade, reporting, etc.

(*c*) The menus at the college commons, club, or fraternity house during one week.

(*d*) The daily schedule—lecture, recitation, study, and recreation—of a student over a period of one week.

(*e*) The provisions for making study efficient in your home, dormitory, club, or fraternity house.—Consider furniture, lighting, quiet periods, reference books, etc.

(*f*) The method in vogue at the college library (or departmental library) of allowing reserved books to be drawn by the student for use outside the reading room.—Consider method of control, time, penalties, number of available copies of a stated book in relation to the size of the class, difficulty experienced in procuring books for home use, etc.

2. Prepare the complete apparatus for a questionnaire to elicit information from students on expenditures during the freshman year.

(1) Consider the usefulness of the following suggestions: (*a*) The total amount of money spent during the freshman year. (*b*) How the money was provided. (*c*) Was it budg-

eted? (*d*) How? (*e*) In how many ways did the budget budge? (*f*) How the money was actually spent. (*g*) Relation between expenditures for tuition, books, and other routine educational items. (*h*) Living expenses: room, meals, laundry, etc. (*i*) Recreation. (*j*) Books other than textbooks: fiction, poetry, drama, etc. (*k*) Pictures and other objects of art. (*l*) Athletics. (*m*) Theater. (*n*) Movies.—Add topics as you see the need.

(2) List the topics you intend to use.

(3) Formulate questions that can be definitely answered. Arrange these questions in the most effective order, leaving spaces for answers.

(4) Write the letter arousing interest and stimulating action.

(5) Submit the completed questionnaire to the instructor.

3. Interpret a group of statistics. In addition to the explanatory text, your report should contain graphs, charts, or other visualizing devices that aid the reader in understanding the tabulated statistics.

(*a*) The season's football scores of three college or university teams.

(*b*) The final or mid-term grades (whichever grades are posted at the time of your investigation) in the courses of one department: mathematics, English, history, etc.

(*c*) Interpret statistics you can find in reference manuals or in reports of police departments, fire and life insurance companies, banks, and in government, state, and municipal reports. Do not use statistics that are interpreted in the source.—If you find your problem in one of the foregoing, or similar, sources, include in your report a complete and accurate memorandum of the sources.

4. Prepare a report on one of the following subjects. In accordance with the type of subject chosen, the investigation may be conducted wholly in the library, by correspondence and interviews, or by a combination of these methods. The scope of many of the following subjects needs to be defined before the investigation is begun. The length of the report varies with the extent of the problem. In all cases, however, the standard requirements of the examination report should be observed.

(*a*) After the subject has been approved, submit a weekly report for the information of the instructor. This report records the work you have done each week in preparation for writing the report. It is a record report.

(*b*) Every fortnight, in place of this record report, submit a progress report, comparing the status of your investigation at the close of the fortnightly period with the status at the close of the previous fortnightly period.

(1) A study of the reports used in planning a new highway, those used in the course of its construction, and those used upon its completion; a bridge; a railroad station; a viaduct; a vehicular tunnel; a ferry slip; a coal trestle; a canal; public waterworks; heating plant in a large department store; electrification of a steam railroad, etc.

(2) The system of municipal reports in force in your (or some other) city.

(3) The annual reports of the ——— company (or bank) during the past — years.

(4) The structure of mining reports as revealed by an analysis of the reports of the ——— company since 19—.

(5) Reports of the Rockefeller Foundation since 19—.

(6) The reports of the United States Department of Agriculture during 1925.

(7) The structure of engineering reports as revealed by an analysis of the reports of ——— (a firm or construction company).

(8) How a large department store handles letter inquiries.

(9) The comparative merits of letter-duplicating machines now on the market.

(10) The comparative merits of two well-known systems of shorthand.

(11) Available books on business letters.

(12) The comparative merits of the two latest reliable books on banking or some phase of banking; marketing or some phase of marketing; or credits and collections; accounting; advertising, etc.

(13) Available books on the psychology of advertising, selling, etc.

(14) Filing methods used by the ——— company.

(15) How sales records are kept.

(16) How the ——— Advertising Agency plans a national advertising campaign for a certain product.

(17) Magazines devoted to the welfare and promotion of business.

(18) The space devoted to business news in a certain daily newspaper.

(19) The duties of an office manager; or a trained business correspondent; or a private secretary to an executive or manager; or the general business correspondent.

(20) Supervision of correspondence in business houses.

(21) Modern mechanical aids in the bookkeeping department.

(22) Manuals issued by large corporations for the use of stenographers, typists, and correspondents.

(23) Style sheets issued by publishers of newspapers or magazines or books.

(24) A study of the kinds of headlines used in newspaper advertisements, or magazine advertisements.

(25) The kinds of products advertised on billboards.

(26) The use of illustrations on the sales letter sheet.

(27) The value of printed inclosures in responses to letters of inquiry.

(28) An analysis of solicited letters of application; or unsolicited letters of application.

(29) An analysis of adjustment letters; or responses to inquiries; or responses to order letters; or follow-up letters; or collection letters.

(30) A study of effective opening paragraphs in adjustment letters, sales letters, or any other type of letter.

(31) A study of effective closing paragraphs in adjustment letters, or any other type of letter.

(32) A study of the layout of effective sales letters.

(33) What the newspapers in a certain city are doing to prevent fraudulent advertising in their columns.

(34) What the committee of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World did last year to enforce the slogan, "Truth in Advertising."

(35) The amount of text used in street-car, elevated, subway, and bus advertisements.

(36) The kind and extent of advertising used by banks.

(37) The cost of the business letter.

(38) Students in Teachers College are probably making surveys in the public schools, the material to be used in one of their courses in the Teachers College. The material can be written up in the form of a report for the class in business writing. The investigation, however, must be in progress at the time reports are studied in the business course. The same holds true of students in engineering, mining, business, etc. The subject should in each case be approved by the instructor in business writing.

N.B.—The foregoing list of subjects can be indefinitely extended. The subjects involving the study of business letters demand not less than twenty-five letters, on which to base the investigation. These can usually be collected from business men and from friends.

5. (*a*) Devise an outline for the weekly record report to be used in reporting your work on the subject chosen for the examination report. (*b*) Plan an effective layout for your approved outline. (*c*) Devise an outline and a layout for your fortnightly progress report. Use the following ideas, and others that suggest themselves to you, as a basis for the exercise.

New leads. Extension of bibliography. Significant points uncovered. Additions to tentative outline. Changes in tentative outline. Statement of problem. Value of collected material.

Time spent. Number of cards. Obstacles and hindrances. Units (pamphlets, letters, reports, books) covered. Work planned. Work done. Results. Proposals. Units that yielded no results. Units that yielded results. Methods employed. Descriptive matter. Explanatory comment. Increase in number of cards. Rate of increase in relation to past work, in relation to total to be accomplished. Correlation of data.

Planned to do. Succeeded in doing. Hope to do.

If you have used letters of inquiry, or questionnaires, or both, attach copies to the report for the week during which you sent them. Copies of responses to your inquiries and questionnaires should also be attached to the report for the week during which they were received.

6. Submit a report on the work you have done to date on your examination report. Devise an effective layout with appropriate headings. State your subject as accurately as you

can at this stage of your investigation. Observe the rules of grammar and the principles of rhetoric. Your instructor is your employer. He desires a report that gives him a picture of your efforts to date. Suggestive headings: material available, collected; methods; time; obstacles, in method or material, etc.

7. Submit a record report based on an analysis of the letters you have written to date in the course in business writing. Organize the letters in chronological order. Make a tabulation chart to show the kind of faults checked in each letter. State the percentage of each kind of error you discover. Let the text of the report be an explanation of this chart. Follow all the headings of the layout except the index.

8. Analyze the following report. To what type does it belong? Make headings for the main divisions; for the subdivisions. Organize these into a table of contents. (See page 436).

Reparagraph the report, giving a specific reason in each case.

Improve the sentences, after you have tested the report for the incorporation of the seven qualities of business writing.

Report of Mr. H. M. Giddy on Trip to Wilton, January 30 to February 3, 1925.

Pittsfield, Mass., February 6, 1925.

The object of my going to Wilton at this time was to make an inspection of the watershed of the Yengeese River and its tributaries above Wilton for the purpose of locating any factories which might allow refuse to enter the streams above the point of our proposed intake, which refuse would have a deleterious influence on the quality of the water. Remembering our experience at Wertoun where the water from the Mercer River, which was apparently free from pollution and an ideal source of supply, developed a strong odor and taste due to the presence of creosote some time after the plant was built, it was decided, before again building a filter plant to use water from another stream, that it would be well to have this investigation made so that we would have a knowledge of the watershed and possible sources of pollution on it. The information to be had in Wilton was not sufficient to enlighten us as to just what might be on the shed and it was necessary actually to go over a large part of it, visiting all the towns of any size above Wilton, to see if factories existed.

The first town of any size is Yengeese which is situated in Parson County, Massachusetts, being about two miles south of the state line. Starting at Yengeese I drove over a circle of about 35 or 40 miles covering practically all the towns and tributaries in the Yengeese Basin. The towns visited were Ellsworth, Anders Settlement, Violet Lake, Raymond, Silver, Newfield, Udysseus, West Binger, and Hickman. Udysseus is a town of 600 or 700 people, Yengeese has a population of about 400. The other towns are all less than 100.

The shed above Yengeese is very clean, the communities being strictly farming towns and having no industries, with the exception of a cheese factory, in any of the towns. There is considerable wood on the watershed which will, in all probability, be used as chemical wood, but it is not present in sufficient quantity in any one locality to pay for the erection of a chemical plant and the hauls to the plants now existing, are so short that I do not believe that any more plants will be built on the Yengeese Shed. These mills have cleaned out the woods except in small patches here and there and their cleaning out is so thorough that it would take years for other trees to grow, which would pay for additional plants to treat the woods.

There are now a number of plants South and West of the Yengeese Shed, all of which drain into other streams, the nearest of these being the large plant at Walton and another at Coneville. I believe Walton drains into the shed of the Merrimac and Coneville into the Moose. In any event they do not drain into the Yengeese.

There is a plant at Yengeese, the present capacity of which is twenty cords per day. This is a new plant, having been built last summer and put into operation about two months ago. I learned from the foreman that it is their intention to increase the capacity to thirty cords next summer. This is the only serious source of pollution on the entire shed. I learned at the plant that notice had been served by the Fish Commission of Massachusetts warning them against polluting the streams so that fish could not live and they have apparently taken as much care as they can to prevent any of their waste products going into the stream. The lime sludge is dried and carried away and not flushed out as is the case at many of the plants in Kean County. All the tar is burned. The alcohol water which is really the worst factor of all is drained into a swamp located about 500 yards from the Yengeese River. A sample of water taken from Yengeese River at a point below this swamp had a faint odor of creosote in the cold sample and when it was heated it had a very decided odor, showing that the pollution is getting into the stream from this swamp. I also learned that the wells in the vicinity of Yengeese have become contaminated and complaint is being made about the creosote taste in the well water. Another sample was taken from the Yengeese at a point opposite our proposed intake. This sample was entirely free from odor and taste

when cold and it developed a very faint odor when heated. The fact that this plant was so recently put into operation and in all probability all the creosote which finds its way into the river has percolated through the ground from the swamp to the river and not run in direct, makes me afraid that the trouble will increase rather than decrease and that even this comparatively small plant might put enough creosote into the water to give it a faint odor and that with certain climatic conditions the odor and taste would become very noticeable.

The determinations of the oxidizable material in these two samples of water show the presence of much less creosote or odor-producing material than I had anticipated. At the time the trouble was had at Warren two years ago, one of the most characteristic tests was the oxygen consumed, which was found to be almost directly proportional to the odor and taste in the samples analyzed. The reagents used for making the tests on the Yengeese River water were old and the results are chiefly of benefit in that they show the trouble causing the constituents to be present in a relatively small quantity and that they also show a marked reduction in the amount present at Wilton as compared with that at Yengeese, this reduction being about 25% in the ten or eleven miles of flow between the two points at which the samples were taken.

No tests were made of the well water but I found, in the receiving well, great flocks of iron which had precipitated from the water. It seems, at this time, that it will be a practical proposition to use a combination of river water and well water and possibly secure a sufficient dilution of the river water to reduce the creosote trouble so that it will not be noticed. On the other hand the iron which is present in the well water could be utilized as a coagulant, the iron itself being entirely removed and a great reduction being made in the hardness of the water. This would be following out the same plan which we have partially tried out and expect to operate on a large scale in Granite City.

Judging from the appearance of the water and the absence of any odor I believe the iron is present almost entirely in the form of a carbonate and not of a sulphide. This makes it easier to handle. It is hard to predict just what influence the waste from the chemical plant will have but from the conditions as noted at this time I am somewhat afraid of it in case we should decide to use river water exclusively.

I spent a couple of days in Wilton becoming acquainted with the plant and going over general conditions with Mr. Walker but the most benefit derived was the information which I gained. The other conditions have been so recently gone into by other representatives of this office that it is not necessary for me to make any other suggestions or comments.

N. B. With the exception of changes in names, this report is reproduced as it was handed to the executive. Although this report is obviously below the average by every test the student can apply, many such reports are written every day. The need of care is obvious. This report is not attractive to the eye, neither is it easy to read. The substantial contents deserve a better dress. The report would be easier to read if the complete layout were used. The sentences are not so much sentences as heaps of ideas.

9. The following chart is taken from a student report. Study it as an example of visualization. Does it give a complete picture of the student's work during the first half of the semester?

Report on Progress and Improvement in Daily Assignments in Business English eB6

Dr. Babenroth

CHART SHOWING STATUS OF EACH LETTER

		Errors Made								
Letters	Grade	Spelling	Punctuation	Grammar	Paragraphing	Repetition	Loose Construction	Vague	Weak	Total
1	C	..	1	1	1	1	1	..	..	5
2	C	1	..	1	1	..	1	1	..	5
3	C—	1	..	1	1	..	2	2	1	8
4	C	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	3
5	C	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	1	4
6	C	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	2
7	C	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	3
8	B—	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	3
9	B—	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	3
10	B—	..	2	..	..	..	1	1	1	5
11	C	1	..	..	..	..	3	..	1	5
12	B	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	2
13	A—	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
14	B	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	2
Total		8	7	5	5	2	13	6	5	51
Per Cent		15.3	13.8	9.7	9.7	3.9	25.6	11.9	9.7	100

EARLE M. CURRIE

April 7, 1925

10. Study the following letter and questionnaire to determine whether the letter is persuasive and the questionnaire effective. Be specific.

Dear Mr. Billings:

Last year you wrote us for information about Maine, and we were very glad of the opportunity to serve you.

We want to know just how efficient our service is.

If you will answer the questions below and mail in the enclosed envelope we will appreciate it very much. Your answer will help us determine our policy for future work. Any criticisms or suggestions for the improvement of our service, or that of hotels where you stayed or towns or resorts visited, which you may be pleased to offer, will be welcome.

No publicity, which will in any way mention your name, will be given to your replies.

Yours very truly,
STATE OF MAINE PUBLICITY BUREAU,

(Signed) HARRIE B. COE, General Secretary.

Did you visit Maine in 1924? .....
What means of transportation was used? .....
How many people were in your party? .....
How long did your party stay in Maine? .....
Did you stay at a Hotel? ..... Public Camp? ..... Farm? .....
Camp or Cottage? .....
If so, which one? .....
Did you stay at a Motor Camp? ..... If so, which one? .....
Approximately how much money did
your party spend while in Maine? .....
Did you purchase property while in Maine? .....
Are you interested in purchasing or build-
ing a permanent summer home in Maine? .....
What caused you to consider
MAINE for your 1924 vacation? .....
If it was our advertising, where did you see it? .....
Where do you plan to spend your vacation in 1925? .....
Please use the reverse side of this sheet for any general comment you are pleased to give us.

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